CALIFORNIA

AN ENGLISHMAN'S IMPRESSIONS OF THE GOLDEN STATE

BY

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS
BY
E. NORA MEEK

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay."
Oliver Goldsmith.

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PREFACE

In sending out this volume, I think it were well if I advised my readers that, as my sub-title suggests, the following chapters are not in any sense intended to be more than a record of observations of the simple and everyday things of life in the Far West, as they occurred to me. I have scarcely touched upon California's early history; the incidents of those stirring days of '49 have already been recorded. I have steered clear of her politics, and hardly touched upon her commercial aspects, or the vexatious question of alien immigration.

Students of sociological problems will find that I have but skirted the fringe of what is, perhaps, the most poignant topic of the hour throughout America to-day; that slow kindling in the camps of labour of the fires of rebellion and anarchy; that increasing bitterness against the rich, which would seem to threaten not only California, but the whole Republic with the fiercest civil war yet known to history. Instead of dwelling upon these stupendous subjects; instead of climbing the highest points of her lofty mountains, I have traversed California guided rather by a vagrant taste for idling and roadside observation, than by any desire to tilt against the windmills of great national problems.

It may come as a surprise and regret to some that the Yosemite and the Grand Cañon of the Colorado have not been accorded some space in this volume. But one cannot see everything in a country as vast as California, and I hope that, in a multitude of minor impressions of the State and its people, readers will be in a measure compensated, as I have been, for any disappointment they may feel owing to the absence of any reference to these great natural wonders. On the other hand, there are doubtless others who will rather welcome a Californian book whose pages are not monopolised or submerged, as they must sometimes be, by the dominating presence of the more transcendant features of the State.

If, in dealing with some of the characteristics of his daily life, I may seem to have hit the Native Son rather hardly, it is, as the reader will observe, because I feel strongly, not so much against the individual, but against what one may call that atmosphere of illusion, self-deception, and malfeasance which he, as a community, fosters, often, perhaps, unwillingly.

To attempt any exact analysis of the American character, especially in the West, seems altogether impossible. Your average Westerner is such a parcel of conflicting natures, the result of a mixed and recent origin, and has so much natural precocity—always a marked attribute of a "raw cross," to use a breeder's term—that any attempt to bring together his various attributes into any definite form must only end in dissatisfaction or chaos. If no one really understands the American character—and I do not think they do—it is

equally certain that the American himself does not. The truth is, to put it in a few words, the individual, like the nation, is only in the making. Still in the melting-pot of youth, it is too soon yet to make any safe conjecture as to what the people are, or will be. That being so, it is not surprising that one should find ignorance and boastfulness (which are one) and want of integrity, the two most prominent " bumps " in the nation's budding embryo.

In dealing with the callow or the obstreperous fledgling, one is sometimes constrained to be guided by the gentle couplet :

" Be to their faults a little blind,
Be to their virtues very kind."

But, knowing what I do of my friend, the Native Son, I had rather, for his sake, take Theodore Hook's advice and say, whenever I have occasion to be confronted by an American on the bounce : " Excuse me, sir, but are you really anybody in particular ? "

A. T. J.

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CALIFORNIA

CHAPTER I

THE CITY OF THE ANGELS

A MAN who once wrote a book about Canada began it thus : " Canada is a flat country."

I wonder if the sort of notion which the average European has regarding California is of a more comprehensive kind ? He may have heard that it has a fine climate, that oranges grow there, while possibly the name of the State is vaguely connected in his mind with somebody's soothing syrup. But a glance at the atlas, if interest carries him so far, will show him a strip of country situated in a remote corner of the American continent, so far off that it is upon the other side of the world ; and there the matter will probably end.

Not very long ago I myself was not much better equipped with knowledge of the " El Dorado " State, but there was some little satisfaction in finding, on my arrival in the West, that I at least knew as much about California as the average Western American knew about Great Britain.

But, before proceeding farther, it might be well to offer the reader a very brief sketch of California's principal physical features.

If one had the eye of an eagle, an eagle with a more than unusually good sight, and were to soar upwards to a height of say ten thousand feet above Sacramento, the capital of California, one would be able to make this superficial survey, with the State below outspread like a map.

Looking westward, the Pacific reaches a hazy band of empurpled blue, across the horizon. Except for the ragged headland of Monterey, with its dark crest of pines, and that narrow neck of water which links the ocean with San Francisco's bay, the coastline lies smooth, brown, and wind-swept, its monotony unbroken by any other features of note. The coast range, with its rolling hills of dull, earthy buff, for the winter rains have not yet come, extends from Tamalpais to the north, and from Mt. Hamilton to the south, with many a forest-crowned height and fruitful valley, only the waters of San Francisco, which lie between, breaking the continuity of the mountains.

Directly below to the left, as far as the great Mojave Desert; to the extreme right where Mt. Shasta dominates the horizon with its mighty bulk, lies the great central valley of the West, with an approximate length of six hundred miles, and an average width of thirty miles. From this immense basin, from the watershed of the great Sierra Nevada, which latter rises to eastward like a wall five hundred miles long, seventy miles in width and up to nearly fifteen thousand feet in height, the main waters of California gather themselves together at Suisun, pass into one of the grandest natural harbours in the world, and thence to the Pacific through the Golden Gate.

This, then, imperfect as I know the sketch to be, is California ; a country nearly twice the size of Great Britain, but with a population barely greater than that of the Principality of Wales.

Los Angeles was the town for which I had booked in New York, and, including a brief " stop over " of a few hours at Niagara, it took exactly nine days, instead of the scheduled five, for the train to do its three thousand miles across the continent.

Of the two main routes by which Los Angeles may be approached from Oakland—the landward gate of San Francisco—circumstances decided that I should go by way of the San Joaquin Valley. And it is when passing over that immense area of six thousand square miles, that the stranger first becomes impressed by California's importance as a producer of grain. On this occasion, the first upon which I travelled its monotonous miles, the harvesters had ceased work for a year and there was, in a popular phrase, " nothin' doin'." As far as the eye could see, nothing but stubble bristled over the cheerless drab of the sun-burned face of earth. It was that time between seasons when the pulse of life ebbs low, and the mosquito's poison waxes strong ; when there is no wind, no rain ; when the very processes of decay are checked, and the dry, brittle stubble awaits its burial with the seeds of another spring.

True, there were places where geometrical patches of alfalfa covered the earth with a vivid, exotic green, bearing eloquent testimony to the fertilising agency of irrigation. Here, too, the semi-tropical foliage and bright red geraniums of some cosy bungalow would afford a pleasing variety—a dash

of colour in the sombre wilderness. There, orchards of bay-green oranges, soft grey olives and yellowing vines in symmetrical squares, made a chess-board of striking verdure upon the brown, distant hills. Tall and straight eucalyptus trees, hanging their drooping foliage of blue-green about the ranches, suggested that there are seasons here, when both shade from a pitiless sun and protection from wind are a necessity to comfort and health.

But, for the most part, autumn in the great San Joaquin Valley left me with a sensation of weariness. Its level vastness is monotonous, inhospitable. One feels that the sun-cracked soil of those illimitable acres, unploughed, unharrowed, and unsown, only waits for the rain when the great struggle, the great gamble, will once more begin, for the earth does not always produce an hundredfold even in California. I thought that there was but little romance in these leagues of stubble, and subsequently learned there was even less than I imagined.

The metropolis of Southern California is, to give her the full name bestowed upon her by the sponsors who witnessed her birth, La Puebla de Nuestra Señora la Reina de Los Angeles (The City of Our Lady the Queen of the Angels). Little wonder she feels important, and, being an adopted daughter of America, it is not surprising that she is rather proud of the antiquity, nearly a century and a half, which her name suggests; not to mention her Spanish lineage. She is called Los Angeles (for short) by her worthy chaperons, the city fathers, and however unceremonious this may appear to the stranger, he must remember that

people " out West " are so busy telling one another how busy they are that there is no time for etiquette in such matters.

But the " City of the Angels," considered in a modern light, is a prodigy. Though founded, as I have said, about 130 years ago, she dozed away the first century of her existence in a siesta of drowsy indulgence, disturbed only by the transitory conflicts of her zealous lovers, who valiantly slew one another for their señorita's eyes. But when she did awake to the possibilities of civic greatness, she did so with a jump undignified in one so venerable, and most of my readers will not need to be reminded that, inspired with true American bounce, she has been jumping ever since.

In 1880 her population was only just over 11,000. Ten years later it numbered 50,395. She more than doubled that population before 1900 was out, and now shelters over 350,000 people. In the face of such remarkable figures it would be idle to dilate upon the virility and abounding life which is one of the most conspicuous features of the citied hills of Los Angeles. To me, the stranger, her splendid streets and great business blocks were a revelation. Being so, they, in part at any rate, compensated for my disappointment in not finding old-world thoroughfares lined by low adobe buildings ; while her trim parks and beautiful residences, with their wonderful lawns and wealth of flowers, native and exotic, were an enchantment for which I was only partially prepared. First impressions, if not always the most reliable, are often the most enduring, and it was the gardens and the wondrous vegetation of the

streets of Los Angeles that afforded me the earliest evidence of the possibilities of her wonderful climate, if only from a horticulturist's point of view.

But if the romance and old-time spirit which once surrounded Los Angeles and clung to her skirts until comparatively recent days, fled before the revolutionary invasion of America, which "has no use" for such things, the city still has a peculiar individuality of its own. The people who throng her crowded thoroughfares, are a medley of humanity curious to behold. They pass and re-pass, an endless stream to which the whole world has contributed its share. Here meet the extremes of all nations under heaven. They come from the four winds: Spanish gentlemen, blasé and dignified; Mexican navvies and decadent Greeks; Chinamen in cricket-caps which conceal a twist of pigtail; China-girls in black trousers; pale-faced Japs, all youthful and energetic; turbaned Hindoos who never hurry; raw-boned Scandinavians, and well-favoured Germans; clean-shaven, square-jawed Native Sons, with cigars and golden teeth; Britons, smoking pipes and wearing an air of sublime superiority which everyone else silently resents; Mid-West "roomers," with a flavour of the Pilgrim Fathers in their wide-brimmed felt hats and heavy broadcloth; Eastern visitors with well-dressed women; coloured gentlemen in fine linen and brown felt hats; buck niggers in brown felt hats and rags; health-seekers, fortune-hunters, workers, parasites, cockney-sparrows, loafers, and fanatics. All the good and the bad, the dregs and the drift-age of humanity have gathered here, where East

meets West, and where, beneath a sub-tropical sun, the vital energy of the new America of the Pacific coast wars untiringly with the essential elements of lethargy and indolence; elements which are the products of that Southern sun, and which are ever threatening to lure the strongest down the easy slope of indulgence to that "underworld," of which, methinks, the Native Son is half afraid.

Here you may dine, if not sumptuously, for ten cents, or the more fastidious may lunch quite delicately for two hundred. A box in a theatre may be secured for a shilling, and it is not worth any more, a volume of Oscar Wilde for a few cents. For a nickel you may purchase a Sunday newspaper which weighs pounds, and the number of whose columns runs into three figures. From almost every open door in Main Street issue the beguiling strains of the gramophone and the automatic piano, each of which eternally strives with the other for the honour of becoming the national instrument of America. If I were a betting man I would stake my bottom dollar on the former's success. It is, if anything, a more soul-stirring instrument, while the brazen trumpet suggests a martial spirit to the passing eye. Then, of course, there's the little white dog with his head on one side. "My! ain't that just 'cute," the ladies still exclaim when they see him sitting there.

But I digress, and must return to Main Street, to the painted ladies in the glass pay-boxes of those popular, clutch-you-by-the-throat, melodramatic picture shows; to the alluring señorita from Brazil, dark, seductive, and soft of speech,

who will tell you all you desire to know, and sometimes a little more, about your dim future, for a modest dime. You can be hypnotised, seated on a chair on the public sidewalk, before a wild, hysterical-looking gentleman for the same little sum. Step inside one of the palatial "shaving parlors," and you can have your chin lathered and shaved by a lady barber who wears an evening dress of a morning, which in itself is an achievement of no mean order. It will cost you a mere fifteen cents. A hair-cut by the same gentle fingers will cause you to part with a quarter (a shilling), but as it includes the shaving of the back of your neck and a not altogether unpleasing half-hour in conversation with one of the "buds" of the Golden West, who could be niggardly enough to question the cost?

Here, also, the stranger may witness a "continuous performance of the drama of the Garden of Eden, conducted by Darwin, Jr.," in which our first parents do their parts with becoming modesty, and wherein "the largest snake in captivity" (stuffed) exercises his sense of humour by sometimes swallowing the apple himself, much to Eve's disappointment and Adam's chagrin. To judge by the crowds who press in to this novel entertainment, it would appear that the earliest romance in human history still grips the public taste. Then, for the price of a morning paper, you can pass the moments being humbugged by a quack naturalist, and permit your soul to be harrowed by other shows of endless variety and infinite degrees of wickedness carefully veiled, for Los Angeles is desperately care-

SAN FRANCISCO'S SKY-SCRAPERS

By permission of Los Angeles and San Francisco Chamber of Commerce

FIFTH STREET : LOS ANGELES

ful of her morals. You may drive to Luna Park, the Coney Island of Los Angeles, or to the Alligator Ranch, where an ancient saurian will, with grim resistance, shoot the chute for your entertainment. Then there is the Ostrich Farm, China Town, an illusive tourist catch that wears well in most Pacific Coast towns, an Indian Camp, and a host of other places, all of which may, if you are a millionaire, be reached in a taxi. The less fortunate can board one of the street cars, which will carry him over hundreds of miles of town and country, seaside and mountain, for the modest fare of one cent a mile.

If one considers the fact that Los Angeles is twenty miles from San Pedro, the nearest seaport, her rapid growth and prosperity cannot fail to strike the visitor as being the more phenomenal. But if we regard her as an inland town, which she is, what a future would be hers had she a navigable waterway to the ocean. It would be a comparatively simple matter to convert her own river, which flows into San Pedro's splendid harbour, into a canal. Americans are accustomed to handle, with skill and enterprise, engineering feats far greater than that would entail ; yet it is not done. I believe it is well known that the " national debt " of Los Angeles is a heavy burden, but that, again, does not usually stand in the way of expansion. We know the railway companies in America are all-powerful, and perhaps that one, which now profits as freight-bearer between Los Angeles and the sea, objects to the suggested canal which has been talked of for so many years. Howbeit, it is not for me to speculate on the

subject, but anyone who can see a hole through a ladder must be convinced that when the race for commercial prosperity begins, which the opening of the Panama Canal will set agoing among the coast towns of California, Los Angeles, without a harbour, will be heavily handicapped.

The system of electric "trolley cars," already mentioned, the lines of which radiate like the strands of a spider's web from the heart of the city to the sea on one side and to the summit of Mt. Lowe on the other, is in its scope, management, and comfort, the best I have ever seen in any land. It was by one of these lines that, as an antidote to the somewhat noisy gaiety of Los Angeles, I sought the green quiet of Pasadena, and, verily, that fast-growing town proved to be a cool oasis of luxuriant growth, in striking contrast to the dusty, sun-parched hills through which the car threaded its way. As an antidote it was as water after wine—but of this more anon.

Like most of the towns of California, the business section of Pasadena is confined to the limits of a few "blocks," while the residential part covers an enormous area. In England, or on the European continent for that matter, Pasadena's population of some thirty thousand would often be compressed into one-tenth of the space she occupies, and yet not be overcrowded. But the arms of America are long, and she has a habit of doing things in a big way. Where a Frenchman would wax fat with content upon a few yards of garden, the Westerner will tackle a square mile of mother earth, with endless inventions and unlimited mules and fail to live. If in the building

of her cities America cannot reach out laterally, she goes heavenward. But, one way or the other, go she must. Thus, to the stranger who desires to visit one of the lateral cities, of which Pasadena is a sample, he soon finds " footing it " as obsolete a mode of progression as it is in a " sky-scraper."

It was on the outskirts of Pasadena that I was first introduced to the common practice, in America, of labelling what appear to be rough country roads, often mere tracks far from any habitation whatsoever, with the names of potential streets. A telephone wire overhead may suggest that there may be a ranch somewhere, possibly some miles away among the vines, the citrus orchards, or primeval forest. But to the European who sees, here, among a jungle of scrub and rank grass, a cast-iron standard bearing the legend " Oleander Avenue," or there, smothered in a thicket of bramble and thorn, another, which tells him the place is " Fremont Street, North," he has some cause for curiosity. The thoroughfares of cities which are, he knows; the streets of cities which have been and passed away, he also knows ; but here are the names of roads which are intended to thread the cities which are yet to be ! The feature is interesting if only as an eloquent testimony to that evergreen hope which springs eternal in the pushful land prospector's breast.

If the stranger is of an inquiring turn of mind, he may look up the proprietor of this unborn city in his office of " real estate," and in all probability he will be shown a map or plan of wondrous design, delineating the primeval landscape as a trim residential town, with its coquettish models of

bungalows and avenues of stiff Noah's Ark trees. The gentleman in the office will be accommodating and uncommonly civil. With a toothpick he will point out how this plot and that and the other have just been sold; how the land is rising in value with every tick of the clock; how this "corner plot," that is being given away as a genu-wine "snap," will treble its selling price in three weeks. Perhaps the stranger feels persuaded to go in for it. An incautious hesitancy on his part, however, suggests to the "real estate" man that his prospective patron has not got the ready cash. It is of not the slightest consequence; he will be delighted to accommodate by advancing the money, or by disposing of the land for a nominal and absurdly low sum down, the balance to be paid in instalments, "free of interest," and covering a long period of time. Thus may the speculative greenhorn be seduced into becoming the first lonely owner of a plot of ground, for which he has paid, or promised to pay, an outside sum, and which may never increase one cent in value in twenty years, if, indeed, it does not prove itself a costly possession.

I do not suggest, as the patient reader will gather, that all real estate business is a fraud, but I do say that a very great deal of it is. It is not only the tenderfoot who is humbugged and fleeced by the land sharks, but almost anybody who is not "in the know," is liable to "go down the nick" through dabbling in land. I have termed "real estate" work a business. It may be, and of course is, in some quarters, but, speaking generally, it is a huge gamble, conducted on a most

stupendous scale by people of both sexes, all professions, religions, and classes. Yet here, in the West, where a puritanical fanaticism has swept horse-racing out of the country, where a saloon-keeper plying an honest trade is a lost soul, and where Mother Grundy rules with a tyranny known to few countries, the land sharks, moneylenders, and all the pernicious crew in whose hands is most of the real estate business, live a charmed life. Many a Californian has told me that these "shysters" are the greatest obstacle to progress the country has got, for possible buyers of land will not buy because they can trust nobody. Few places are more hardly hit by this condition of affairs than San Francisco. There is no reason whatsoever why land should not be bought and sold as a marketable commodity with fair play to everyone concerned. There is risk and uncertainty in any business; but no one who has ever lived three weeks in California with his eyes open will hazard his money on that great gaming-table of earth, unless he does so in a spirit of sport and devil-may-care.

The gardens of Pasadena are, perhaps, her proudest possessions, and I mean not only those public places where bands and flowers, trees and lawns, minister to the people's sense of pleasure, but the borders and grass-plots which surround the "homes," as well as those parterres of gay blossoms which, co-operating with the avenues of shady trees, make gay with colour the kerbstones of the public way. Just as all the nations of the world have made a cosmopolitan whole of the population of Los Angeles, so almost all quarters

of the globe have enriched the cities of south-western California with specimens of their botanical wealth. To a northern European entering Pasadena, San Diego, Santa Barbara, or parts of Los Angeles in winter, it is like entering a vast conservatory, whose domed roof is the cloudless blue and in which a sumptuous array of floral splendour is on view. Here the choice exotics familiar in our home conservatories—callas, poinsettias, fuchsias, camellias, plumbago, heliotrope, and others bloom out of doors, flooding with a galaxy of colour the borders of the wooden bungalows, flinging their fragrant branches over porch and trellis when the far eastern country lies in the iron grip of winter. Everywhere, bright green "pepper-trees," their fern-like branches hung with coral fruit, make avenues of shade over the excellent, well-kept streets. Great magnolias, filling the air with an odour, somnolent and sweet, overshadow cool lawns. Acacias in infinite variety, with exquisite foliage and racemes of brilliant yellow flowers, camphor and rubber trees, palms of almost every description, and a host of others, contribute their beauty and interest to these cities of trees and flowers. At Pasadena there is a Rose and Floral Tournament held every year on New Year's Day, which, in itself, is sufficient evidence of the mildness of the Southern Californian winter.

Beautiful as these trees and flowers undoubtedly are, it will be noticed by any observant visitor that most of them are exotics, which thrive not only on account of the comparatively high temperature in which they, as settlers, live, but that

their existence is equally dependent upon supplied moisture and the gardener's care. Look beyond the confines of these cities into the valleys and plains of California, and you will find that they are, for three seasons of the year, sun-burned deserts. But they respond spontaneously to the application of water. It is the liberal use of the hose-pipe and garden sprinkler, which are turned on with such lavish generosity in the gardens and parks, that has been the main factor in making the wilderness blossom as the rose. Indeed, the quantity of water which is used upon the ornamental gardens, not to mention the streets, of Pasadena, would appear to be more than that consumed for all other purposes.

This would probably not strike the reader as being anything very extraordinary in a country where water is abundant, but in Southern California, where water is none too plentiful, the innumerable sprinklers which are kept going, not only all day but often all night, filled me with dismay. Granted that water has been the chief agent in making Pasadena what she is, a city of lovely flowers and green lawns, is there any reason why waste should be committed on such an appalling scale. There must some day be a limit to the water supply in Southern California, if she progresses at her present rate. Many river-beds are already dry and bleached white beneath the sun, partly or wholly through man's influence. This means a diminution in nature's powers of moisture conservation, owing to the dwindling of vegetation about such dry rivers. It means that, if the process is carried farther, and the country

drained of its life's blood, the face of nature will no longer have a welcome for the settler or visitor, and the people of California will have killed the goose that lays the golden egg. It is upon the annual tourist crop, bear in mind, that those cities of California already mentioned and many others mainly depend for their existence. Without it they would be near bankruptcy in six months.

With the above remarks upon the popularity of the water-cart and the faucet, the reader may be surprised to learn that Pasadena is a " dry city," very dry. How long it has been in that exalted condition I do not know, but it is so immensely respectable that I can imagine it to have been " dry " since its birth, to have been nurtured on the desiccated milk of a hierarchy of feeble-minded individuals who, to-day, are bossed and badgered by commitees of unbalanced women, with " views " upon all sorts of things which they know next to nothing about. I do not pretend to suggest that a man cannot get a " highball " in Pasadena, for, despite the periodical " round-ups " of the police, the " blind-pig " still exists, and his tenacity of life waxes stronger in exact proportion to the amount of persecution he receives. But no man—not even in the big " exclusive " hotels, in which stay visitors from all climes—can openly buy a drink. The bottle of beer is anathema ; it is the accursed thing, the symbol of all that is evil in the hidebound visions of every prohibition enthusiast who calls himself, or herself, a reformer.

But I do not intend to say anything further upon the subject here, beyond reminding the good people of Pasadena that those beautiful Busch

"BLEACHED WHITE BENEATH THE SUN"

MARENGO AVENUE: PASADENA

Gardens, which they advertise so loudly, of which they are so proud, and in which they forgather with sunny self-satisfaction to do homage to the man who opened the gates of those gardens to the citizens, are owned by one who is both a millionaire and a brewer of beer. Yet, from pulpit and platform, from side-walk and from public road, the brewer, and all that pertains to his maligned trade, is execrated, howled at, and cast upon the scrap heap of villainy by the thankless crowd who have only yesterday, perhaps, been enjoying the hospitality and generosity of one of the very beings they so intemperately condemn.

There are few places in the West where religion has any considerable hold upon the people, but Pasadena, as I have suggested, is an exception. It is a stronghold of—I had rather not say religion—Sabbatarianism, a place where the Sabbath was clearly not made for man. Here denominations are legion, from the Episcopalian, which is, of course, the lap-dog of "Society," down to the latest convert of the street corner, who, proclaiming himself a sinner, at least has the recommendation of humility. And to many Europeans the manner in which some of these institutions cater for the popular taste would be a shocking revelation. Their "services" are announced in the papers where one looks for the latest arrivals in vaudeville. They are advertised on the electric cars, on the hoardings, and by handbills. Over one street a banner announces the coming of the Rev. Dr. Evangel and his quartette of singers to a particular church; while an opposition show round the corner clamours for

patronage by proclaiming the approach of some other pulpit star, with a cornet. Thus do the various sects, who are strong enough to be in the running at all, strive with one another, not for the grace of God, but for public patronage—for money. In towns, of which Pasadena is a fair example, it is the women who run the parson, poor devil! It is before them that he must prove his "drawing power." It is under the heel feminine that this wretched sycophant must labour, lest he, the shepherd, be "fired" by the ewes of his own fold. But why this "drawing power," why this commercial flavour? the interested may inquire. Because the pews of many of these churches have a monetary value which rises or falls as the popularity of the preacher waxes or wanes. The seats of a church are "boomed" like any patent medicine; they are bought and sold like stock in the market-place, like real estate, and it is the "drawing power" of the preacher which is the factor that governs this market value. If the pews had a fixed price, like the stalls in a theatre, the matter would have rather a different face, but to convert them into tables for money-changers....

I do not say that all churches over here are possessed of the same spirit of avarice—the pursuit of the dollar—but a great many of them are. Others are more essentially places for the entertainment of the "idle rich." But in all cases it is the women who lead the van. The men are, for the most part, frankly irreligious. They put the clerical profession below that of the banker or the lawyer. In a phrase of their own, they "have no use for it."

CHAPTER II

"ON THE ROAD OF A THOUSAND WONDERS"

DURING my voyage across the Atlantic a young American was part occupant of my cabin. He was an Easterner and a semi-detached husband returning from London, where he had been to buy a diamond. When he was not occupied in telling me all about himself, the diamond, and the many English people with each of whom he had left legacies of advice on all manner of subjects, he was kind enough to interest himself on my behalf. I learned a great deal from that young man. He impressed upon me, above all other things, never to say "Please," "Thank you," or "I beg your pardon," for to give away one's nationality in America by expressing these little civilities was tantamount to being fleeced. From his talk I gathered that not the least among California's proudest products was the Native Son. Of course, he, the latter, was pictured as being as far removed from his brother of the East as a simian is from an archangel.

"But anyway," said my cabin-mate, "you'll sure-ly find him a genu-wine sort of a cracker-jack. If he does think he's got the world by the tail on a downhill pull, well, that doesn't matter to me any. But you needn't put yourself out of the way to be civil to him; he don't like it, and

if he asks you to drink don't forget he can swallow anything that'll float an iron wedge—you mayn't be used to such tack. . . . Yes, sir ! once you are fairly on 'The Road of a Thousand Wonders' you'll certainly see somethin' you never seen before."

And I may hazard the risk of flattering the Native Son by saying that he was not the least of these Wonders. My first introduction to him was in Los Angeles, and I can recall the incident as though it happened yesterday. He is standing on the doorstep of an hotel in Broadway, enjoying the subtle delights of a "dry smoke," while he sharpens the point of a wooden toothpick. In spite of the cigar, his square, well-padded jaws, cleanly shaven, are busy with his beloved "spearmint," or quid of other consolatory gum. He is not unmindful of the adjacent spittoon, one of which sits in silent ministration at the side of each rocking-chair in the hall. At intervals, when the toothpick suggests that its owner has dined, I am confronted with the fact that Jack Johnson is not the only Californian who is proud of a mouth that is paved with gold. He is bulky in build, our Native Son, so bulky that the Stetson hat of pale grey felt, flat and round as a plate, which squats on his head, bears about the same proportion to his body as a split pea would to a healthy pumpkin that had been fed up for Thanksgiving. His clothes of brown are much too big for him ; the trousers bear the unmistakable imprint of that "imperishable crease" which, to some extent, has become its wearer's salvation. His well-filled chest is adorned, like Dickens's page-boy,

with " an eruption of buttons " and other heraldic devices, each of which denotes his importance as a member of some society or club, or is an indication of his prowess and valour in the realm of sport. From somewhere about his waistcoat there dangles a watch fob, a splendid thing of broad black ribbon terminating in an enormous medal of sumptuous design.

He eyes the passers-by with an expression somewhat resembling scorn, for there are dagos (Italians) whom he hates ; Japs, whom he dislikes, but fears to rebuke ; Chinese, whom he disdains to notice, and—but I am forgetting myself, who am also among the crowd. He marks me down as a " bloomin' Englishman "—perhaps a " sucker," or a " remittance man "—and no sooner have I entered the hotel and sought refuge in a rocker, than he is beside me, examining the outward and visible signs of my nationality, my clothes. Having puttees swathed around my British calves, curiosity gets the better of him, and he abruptly asks me what they are called " anyway."

" Puttees," is my meek response to the rasping question.

" Putt—How's that ? "

" Puttees," I say again.

" Well, I guess they are A, No. 1 for that game " (I assume he refers to golf !), " but they'd soon be raked to ribbons huntin' in the chaparral of this country. . . . Goin' to lo-cate ? " (still gazing at the puttees).

I reply in the negative.

" What's your business ? " he asks.

" I have no business," I remark, and before the words are well out of my mouth, he has coaxed his spittoon a little nearer with the toe of his boot. I feel sure he believes me to be a detested " remittance man," for he immediately clears his throat with a nerve-racking, scraping sound resembling that of a skid-brake on a rocky road, suggesting a nasty taste in the mouth. " But I am a writer, a wandering scribe," I hastily add by way of explanation, " working my passage about the world."

He at once seems more composed after that, and, giving me an excellent cigar, the end of which I bite off, remembering the advice, in lieu of thanks. Now he leans forward and carefully feels those strange things which clothe my legs, putting a finger under one of the bands to see how tight it is.

" Where did you get the darned things, anyway ? " he jerks.

" At Basle."

" H'm, in Yurrup . . . I figured they were English."

" So they are," I respond.

" How's that ? " he asks, with a startling abruptness, by which I gather that it is his way of saying he begs my pardon, that he did not quite catch my last remark, and that he would feel obliged by my repeating it once again.

" This pair," I explain, " was made in England and sold in Switzerland. . . . Have you ever been over there ? "

" No ! My policy is to ' see America first ' . . . and . . . how much did you say they cost ? . . . Bit of a proposition to put them on, ain't it ? "

"Six francs—a dollar and a quarter," I reply, and before I can enter upon the "proposition" he has looked anxiously at his watch and vanished.

That, in brief, was my first introduction to the Native Son. Not a bad sort of a fellow, as my cabin friend had suggested. A little rude, perhaps—but that is just his manner. He means well. Personal, possibly, and not without a flavour of the self-made man about him; but, after all, the self-made man, as someone has reminded us, spares the Creator a tremendous responsibility.

Since that little incident happened, I have met the Native Son (and with him I will, for the sake of convenience, include the Californian male generally) in divers places. I have talked with him, slept under his roof, gone a-fishing with him and ofttimes smoked his calumet (a corn-cob, sweet and cool), over many a red camp fire. There is much in him that I have learned to appreciate and admire, more, perhaps, than I will ever be able to tell. But there is one feature of his which, like a skeleton at the feast, I was ever conscious of. I refer to that antipathy towards England which lurks in every Westerner's heart. How has it got there? What keeps alive the ill-gotten flame? Why is it that when England suffers, a laugh of satisfaction rings throughout the West, if not throughout America? One suggestion I can offer, in so far as California is concerned, in solution of the problem is, that, in early days, many adventurous English came over to this State and, often by wedding Spanish heiresses, came into possession of vast lands and wealth. But I should imagine that the Westerner,

who prides himself upon being a sportsman of quality, would prefer to give these lusty old pioneers their due for winning the race, to say nothing of the dusky ladies, in a fair game, rather than nurse the memory of defeat, if it can be so termed.

Then, of course, there is the old grievance against Irish immigration, now all but entirely submerged by the Oriental invasion. "The war," again, memories of which are whipped up afresh every July 4th, is another fly in the ointment of that brotherly love which some people imagine exists between the States and Britain. But, while it is good and well for the Yankee to make merry over the Declaration of Independence, it is worse than childish, it is barbarian, to savour those rejoicings with rancour. If the Western Yankee were able to say that English immigrants flooded his labour markets, or that we were unfair competitors in the world of commerce, he might have some cause for complaint. But the Briton is more often a capitalist and an employer of labour than anything else, and has been since early days. As tourists, it would appear that we are quite desirable beings, in spite of our sins.

But is there any valid reason why a single grain of that precious thing called love should be lost between the two nations? I for one do not feel inclined to go on my knees to Brother Jonathan and plead, in the words of that delightful cartoon[1] of Mr. Max Beerbohm's, in this wise: *"O sir, please sir,* DO *let us young Hanglo-Saxons stand shoulder to shoulder agin the world. Think of our*

[1] New Age, September 21st, 1911.

A FOREST CLEARING

A WESTERNER'S HOME

AN ADOBE HOUSE : SANTA BARBARA

common tongue. Think of that there 'Mayflower.' O, sir, sir, ain't blood thicker than water?"

(*"B. J. guesses the At-lantic is not com-posed of blood."*)

And I guess he is about right.

However, it is not without some sensations of relief that I pass over the subject with that brief reference and turn to that other peculiar trait, not unallied to the other, in the Westerner's mind — disparagement of England and the English.

This is mainly the fruit of gross ignorance, for the travelled American is only too ready to admit that England is a little more advanced than she was in the days of George III; that she understands the uses of an electric bell; that she has trains which can go at sixty miles an hour; that there are still a few green fields left between her towns; that mules no longer draw the London 'buses; that the telephonic and telegraphic systems have been installed for "quite a while"; that the average family is tolerably comfortable, even if underpaid and ground down (I believe that is the proper democratic phrase) by a monarchical government. What a debt of gratitude do we not owe, therefore, to the more intelligent American who can thus so magnanimously award us due credit for our humble attainments. He might go a step farther and inform his compatriots that it were as near the truth to contend that every Englishman dropped his h's and said "aw, yaas" as it were to say that every Yankee said "yah," was duck-footed and lantern-jawed, that the clothes of the male

American were always too big for him, while his lady was too big for her clothes.

Of course, the Englishman of the stock pattern abroad—he who is, in Gissing's words, "a vivified statue of gentlemanly *ennui*," a superb specimen of incarnate superciliousness—is overbearing enough to hurt the feelings of a brass monkey who is so indiscreet as to take him seriously. And so long as the Yankee allows himself to be rubbed the wrong way by the presence of this pompous stranger, rather than defend himself with the only effective weapon—humour—so long will he be haunted by such disquieting companions, as resentfulness and venom.

It will generally be observed that the Americans who are most fond of disparaging Europe in general, and Britain in particular, are, as I have suggested above, they who are too hide-bound with ignorance to conceive of any advantage in foreign travel, or who cannot afford to go far beyond their own boundaries. The grapes are sour. Rather than admit the fact that they are either too self-centred, or that they will not spend either the time or the money to travel, the Westerners join that crowd of self-interested people—railway magnates, hotel proprietors and the rest—who cry aloud :

"IF YOU MUST SEE EUROPE, SEE AMERICA FIRST."

Thus, to the promoters of this latest battle-cry, the stay-at-home native becomes an easy prey. It was a deep move on the part of those who are the greatest gainers thereby, and the bait, so nicely garnished with a slim veneer of patriotism,

they knew full well would be eagerly swallowed by the ignorant shoal. Now no one can blame the Native Son for any desire he may have to see America—a most admirable ambition. But do the people who stuff him with stagey description and exaggerated, often quite false, reports of this or that "scenic allurement" on "The Road of a Thousand Wonders" spend their time in trotting about America? Not they. But they spend the money, provided by the said "masses" and by what other tourists they can get, in Europe, which they like much better than America. "All good Americans go to Paris when they die," we know. Yet those same people, or some of them, because they have interests vested in America, play upon the feelings of their less fortunate brethren in the manner I have already described. They, or their agents, organise conventions and bureaux, issue pamphlets and information generally, by way of pointing out that some three thousand to four thousand misguided Americans go to Europe every summer, spending on their trip perhaps two hundred million dollars in hotel expenses and incidentals; that many fine hotels in Europe are practically kept going by America, and much other information, which stiffens the neck of the easily gulled Westerner, who forthwith decides to set a patriotic example by staying within the boundaries of his own land. But, as a matter of fact, it is much less a question of patriotism than it is of money, as I have suggested. All those millions of good silver dollars should be kept in America. And, because they are spent abroad, the European—especially the English-

man—is not loved any better by our friend " out West."

I am fully alive to the fact that the Yankees who visit Europe are not all plutocrats, " idle rich," for there are thousands of the more intelligent middle classes, by your leave, who are wise enough to know that they can get better value for money, from every point of view, by spending their vacations in Europe than they ever could in America. But that fact does not help matters in the eyes of the " see America first " set, and the stay-at-home patriots feel even more aggrieved when they have to realise that it is not only those silly " Society " people, for whom they pretend not to care a toss, who go to London and Paris, but their schoolmasters, professors, librarians, bankers, and men who are prominent in small municipalities throughout the land.

Being in California at the time of the Coronation of King George V, to view which ceremony so many Americans went to London, I had an exceptional opportunity of observing the Westerner's feelings towards that event. He could not speak of it without emotion ill-savoured by scorn. Was it not a magnet which drew millions of dollars from the States, and was it not, therefore, a thing to be despised, ridiculed and jeered at ? Yet, provide the opportunity, and where will you find a people who are fonder of the glamour of pageantry than the Yankee ? There was, moreover, a current opinion in the West at that time that the strikes and labour unrest generally which followed the Coronation was a protest from the poor against the spending of so much money by

those in high places! But if there is any country in the world in which more money is spent on fireworks and functions, and where strikes and labour unrest are a more serious menace than in America, I would like to hear of it.

Who has not seen the Native Son and his "chunky" (that is the adjective generally used, I think) spouse, towards whom he displays a swagger, sobered with a cautious timidity, setting out to "see America?"

"Of course, it ain't the ticket that keeps me in America," he says, jingling the dollars in his trousers' pockets.

"My! the idea!" is her indignant response from behind the newspaper. . . . "Them Society folk make me tired. . . . Here's Mrs. Col. J. Dyckson saying Paris is 'the sweetest place on earth' . . . and what's this? 'I don't know what some of my friends in 'Frisco will say, but hips are not going to be worn after Thanksgiving.' Did you ever . . . ?" and the paper falls across her ample lap.

"Here, anyways," continues Popper, "I guess Uncle Sam has got more to show us than all their Kings and Emperors, all Europe twice over. . . . Yes, sir!" (looking over a bundle of pamphlets) "there's the Big Trees that was venerable when Christ walked the earth (goin' some that is, eh?); there's Monterey where Robert L. Stevenson was born in 1814 (that's pretty dog-gone old); there's Yo-semite (most scenic place in the world), Grand Cañon, greatest natural wonder on earth, one mile deep, thirteen miles wide (that's bully!); there's a Sphinx somewheres—let me see—in

Arizona. And Niagara. . . . Yes, sir! over that there American Falls there's twelve million cubic feet of water falling every minute . . . that's pretty good, ain't it? And what's this? At Palo . . . "

"My," she interrupts, "it says here about Green-fern Springs, 'This spa(y) was known to the Indians at the dawn of Time. . . . Here are purling rivulets, drinking pools of healing waters, palms with their smiling morning faces, dew-enamelled lawns, slopes a-smile with flowers, 'neath the umbrageous canopy of alluring trees where bask the pilgrims from every clime breathing the fragrance of the oleander the charming hy . . . something-or-other in the rosy mornings or when the sinking sun hangs an inspiring curtain of su-perb wonder across the snowy heights that pierce the firmament (yes! kidney and liver troubles) and in charming be-wildering hap-hazardry the rustic seats beckon the tired the weary and the languid to the so-lace of day-dreams and the se-same of nature's somnolent breast. . . . Like Oliver Twist we only ask for more . . . and only a year, a fleeting year ago it was a lumber shack, though the spring . . . '"

"The petrified forest," he breaks in, "according to Professor . . ."

"My! just think, 'an inex-haustible supply of water gushing out of the mighty, unfathomable bowels of the Plutonic boilers of Mt. Satanus at a mean temperature of 122 Fahrenheit . . . the only genu-wine hot spring in the world beside which Carlsbad is the fizzle of a tin kettle in a hurry'" (she gasps).

". . . According to Professor Van Dome and ex-President Roosevelt, is a freak only equalled by that other stupendous freak the Grand Cañon, and not duplicated by any other freak in the world."

But we must part company with our travelling acquaintances, leaving them to the happy haphazardry of their scenic hallucinations, their canned pork and beans, and return to the main issue.

Intermixed with this spirit of patriotic admiration of their country and with its concomitant—that petty jealousy and scorn of Europe—the traveller in the West may be surprised to find abundant proof of a certain deep-rooted respect even for Britain and what pertains to her. Let, for example, a duke, a lady or other titled person appear in the land, and immediately the press follows his or her every movement with unrepressed excitement. The whole country, so to speak, turns out to see the specimen, not to shoot it and have it stuffed, but to fawn upon it, coax it to stay by feeding it, by petting it and kowtowing to it. Let my lord escape to the wilds to slay goat, let him pursue the trout among the haphazardry of the mountains, or go down to the sea in ships, he is still tracked by the sleuth-hounds (American for detective) of the press that the people may read of him and talk of him and be proud.

"You are not a lord, are you?" said a week-old bride of sixteen to me, as she shivered in a khaki "camping suit" in the spring winds of Pacific Grove.

"Do I look like one?" I responded ruefully, for my clothes (I had but one suit) had served me throughout a long and dusty campaign, and I was out-at-elbows generally.

"I don't know," was her artless reply; "I have never seen a real lord, you know, and should love to."

"You ought to visit England, where you would find lots of them," I suggested.

"Perhaps we will some day. But, you see, it isn't quite wise to go when one is first married, is it? The children may be a nuisance. A son *has* to be born in America to qualify for the Presidency. I think you might have obliged me by being a lord, anyway. I was just sure you were when I knew you were English, and it would have been pretty fine to send a postal to Pop and tell him I had just met Lord Whats-a-name."

I expressed my sorrow on her behalf, and my own, and would like to have told her that, for one so young and inno . . . (no, that will not do), for one so young, her ambition, not to mention her sagacity in domestic matters, was most laudable and should carry her far. But, having accepted my sympathy, she went across to her tent, where "hub," a callow youth, in humble attitude, was cleaning a frying-pan by scraping it with sand.

Go where he will in the West, the traveller will ever be confronted with the fact, that not only are the "best brands" of many goods which the grocers "carry" of well-known English make, but the purveyors of these things, with commendable honesty, tell him so. The biscuits

which "Society" have on their table for "afternoon tea"—an exclusively English institution which a "Society" lady would never dream of omitting from her daily routine, though the masses "have no use for it"—are stamped with the name of a well-known English firm. (They cost sixty cents a pound, and are generally rather stale.) Go to a tailor and he will at once advise you that if you desire anything really good in the way of material, it must bear the hall-mark of British manufacture. Look into a lady's hat shop in Van Ness Avenue, or other arena of fashion, and in the very centre of that wondrous display of "latest creations" you will observe a specimen upside-down, its silken lining drawn out for better inspection of the legend which it bears—"Made in England expressly for Madame Hatte." The china on the table of private dining-room and hotel is almost invariably stamped with the name of a Staffordshire firm—even the heavy, cumbersome delft of the cheapest quality, which one sees in a "two-bit" restaurant, is "made in England," and one wonders how it is that such heavy, breakable material can be sent six thousand miles and still flood the market. I could go on to any extent and mention the silver, the electro-plate, steel ware, whisky, and a hundred other things which come from far-off Britain, and which command the best prices and hold their ground for quality. And I have not the slightest doubt that the American on tour in Europe is constantly running across articles which are made in his country. There is no one who would not give the 'cute Yankee all the

credit that is his due for his clever inventions, and the splendid position he holds in the industrial nations of the world, but he does not quite "rule the roost."

Not long ago Mr. Edison, when in Europe, was asked whether he thought the English were so backward as the Americans made them out to be. "No!" was his prompt reply. "One has only to read the Board of Trade Returns to get rid of that idea." Speaking of the industrial nations, he said: "The English are the highest standard of integrity in the world. . . . Europe sends me home more in love with my own land. Our ways will never be Europe's ways or needs. They are two civilisations, two radically different. One has to remember that in passing judgment. The trouble with stay-homes is that they criticise without a proper basis of knowledge. Every American business man ought to take the summer off and come over here. It will do him good; it's done me lots of good."

But to make comparisons between the American's achievements and the Englishman's is an odious business. The reader will notice that my sole reason for dwelling upon the subject at all is, not that I would make any effort to measure my own country's achievements at the expense of those of another, but simply to point out for the edification of my Western friends how unwarranted is their ridicule of England's affairs, how narrow and petulant their view. But why prolong the subject?

There is an oft-told tale, that will bear repetition here, of a certain Yankee who was expounding

with characteristic exultation the various wonders of Niagara to a Scotsman. The latter heard his eloquent friend with patience and fortitude. When he had quite finished Sandy soberly remarked: "Aye, aye! I ken verra weel a peacock wi' a wooden leg at Peebles." The Yankee is probably wondering to this day what the Scotsman meant. The latter has no doubt forgotten all about it. *Verbum sat sapienti.*

CHAPTER III

"CALIFORNIA LANDS FOR WEALTH"

THERE is a brand of Englishman, not unknown in the West, who goes by the name of "remittance man." Everybody knows him, for he is not, as the Native Son believes, a parasite peculiar to California. With a pound a week to go to the devil on, he haunts the highways and byways of every civilised land, working when he must, idling when he may. But, as his long-suffering parents generally send him as far from home as they can well do, and as he is usually of British blood, it is most often the Pacific Slope, or the Antipodes, to which he is booked. Now the "remittance man" is detested by the Native Son, who can bring no other argument against him than that he idles and drinks as much as he can afford, and often more. He is a frequenter of saloons, generous and gentlemanly enough, but "he ain't a worker," and that's where the shoe pinches. If a man does not go out to his labour in the morning he is counted an undesirable addition to the population.

I have often been looked upon with a suspicious, distrustful eye, because, having no "visible means of subsistence," I might be a "remittance man." And though I, in a hackneyed phrase, hold no brief for the wretched outcast, I have often thought

that the antipathy which is shown toward him by the Native Son is rather undeserved. After all, the "remittance man" costs the country nothing, save perhaps a place in the potter's field at the end. He spends, if he does not earn, spends not wisely, perhaps, but too well. If he does not spend, save on himself, he is a "tight wad." If he works, he is liable to have that stigma cast upon him which in the West has branded the Irish labourer, the Chinese, the Mexican, the Italian, and the Jap in their turn, a stigma that few can afford to cast at another with such pharisaical self-satisfaction as the Native Son has at his command. It is also rather an ugly fact that there are many "remittance men" who have drifted into that dependency through having been "skinned," when in the "sucker" stage, by unscrupulous rogues, such as real-estate men, and others. But, in any case, let that same "remittance man" become the recipient of rather more than the proverbial "pound a week," let him appear to prosper, and the Native Son immediately says, "Friend, come up higher; if you are a bloomin' Englishman, and happen to think you are superior to anybody else, it don't matter; I am beginning to like you."

But if that is democracy in spirit and practice it is a poor thing. It may be argued, however, that such instances seldom or never occur; once a "remittance man," always a "remittance man"; give a dog a bad name and we know the rest. But I would respectfully invite the Westerner to show me the difference between the English tourist who winters in California and the man who

spends both winter and summer there. The one may spend more in a given time, he may spend it in a more seemly manner, he may support the railways, the big hotels, and the show places. The other makes his money—his remittance—go farther, but the country gets it just the same. Is it, then, in keeping with the spirit and letter of a democracy to toady to the one man and hate the other ? The plain, self-evident fact is that this democracy is a farce and a delusion. If, as I have heard it said, this subject is outside the realm of democracy, the matter looks not one whit better. Is there no such thing as tolerance in the land where Demos is supposed to reign ?

One of the first things which strikes the traveller's eye in California, is the tremendous effort that is ever being made to get the tourist and possible settler to visit the Golden State, and the fact, already mentioned in an earlier chapter, that the tourist crop is by far the most important one of the year to the Californian, must come as a surprising revelation to many. Surprising, because a country that is said to be so eminently fertile, that is called " El Dorado," " the vineyard of America," is not the place that one would expect to find so dependent upon the tourist's purse.

As one of the travelling public, with leisure to see the heart of the country, it was not very long before I was convinced that California, as a whole, is over-rated as a fruit-growing and agricultural State ; hence the struggle for the tourist's money. There are, no doubt, some districts, such as the Pajaro Valley, with its fruit orchards, that can hold their own with any in the world, but I have

been assured by practical men that all the land that is worth anything at all has long ago been taken up.

Travelling, as I often did, by road, through the most rural parts of the country, I had exceptional opportunities of seeing things as they are, and rarely, very rarely, did I in many months of wandering, come across a rancher who was not ready to sell out to the first buyer who would offer him hard cash. Why? The explanation is obvious: when the prospective settler, or tourist, visits California, it is, as a rule, in winter, when all the land is green. Water is plentiful, the sun shines, meadow larks are singing, the grass is deep and ablaze with wonderful flowers, the air is like the air of an English June. Perhaps the idea comes to him that he would like to buy a ranch and settle down, for a country that is more fair to look upon he has seldom seen. If he decides to do so, he will find that every land-holder, from the Government down to the humblest squatter, is ready to offer him a ranch. The former will even be so kind as to offer him a free homestead (usually a section of forest land without the forest on some outlandish hill-side) if he will take out his naturalisation papers! He will find the daily newspapers devoting whole pages, many pages, to advertisements, not only of untilled and building land, but of orchards and ranches that are going concerns. He will find that any ranch he sets eyes on is in the market, save, as I have stated, those which are in the hands of the Dalmatians at Pajaro, the Italian-Swiss Wine Company, and a few more.

Everywhere the "real-estate" man is at his elbow with offerings of plots which are fairy-tales of wealth and health. Chambers of Commerce dazzle his eyes with windows decorated like a church at harvest thanksgiving with big potatoes, phenomenal onions, and oranges that one can scarce distinguish from pumpkins. At every railway station, in every village, there are bureaux of information which shower booklets upon him, telling of the virgin soil, abundant water, gold-ribbed mountains, wells of petroleum, and a thousand other things said to be the special feature of this county or that. Those thrilling lines by an inspired native poet—

Californian lands for Wealth,
Californian lands for Health,

ring in his ears. Boards of Trade, Promotion Committees, and monthly magazines, inflated to bursting-point with a pseudo-patriotism, fired by hope of gain, take up the well-known refrain—

California fruit for Health,
California! My Own!

All of which is so bewilderingly exciting that our friend ofttimes begins to wonder whether he has got a dose of American D.T., or the first symptoms of mental apoplexy.

Now, if this prospective buyer is a "genu-wine sucker," upon whom the Native Son loveth to prosper, he will probably fall into the baited trap so cunningly laid for him, and, at the end, be glad to purchase his liberty with his bottom dollar. It may have been his last chance, and his home-people, refusing to part with further capital, put him on to the remittance list, where he remains,

as I have already suggested, scorned by the very people who have deluded and fleeced him.

I do not say that the "remittance man" is always a product of highway robbery of this polite sort, but he sometimes is. And I do not go so far as to suggest that all ranches are a delusion and a hoax, any more than I would say that every intending settler is a "sucker."

But I would draw attention to the incontrovertible fact that California, as an agricultural State—like anywhere else—has drawbacks of which the transitory tourist, or intending emigrant, is quite unaware. We have, as I have stated, shoals of pamphlets and other gushing literature which gives us one side of the question in—I regret to have to mention it again—a highly coloured and grossly misleading form. But what of the other side? Does the intending settler ever hear anything of malaria, which is an unmitigated scourge in many districts of all the great central valleys of the State? a plague so virulent that thousands of people, as settlers or fruit-gatherers, have their constitutions wrecked every year by its ravages. Is he ever told that the irrigation ditches, in one sense the only arteries of life in a country that, but for them, would often be a sun-baked wilderness, are one of the most fruitful sources of malaria in the world? Is the word mosquito ever mentioned in any Chamber of Commerce folder, in any newspaper in the West? Is he informed that the summer climate of any of the central valleys is insufferably hot, or swept by trade winds and blinding sand?

Does he know anything of the countless miles

of soil in California which are so poisoned by alkalies, or rendered so sterile by "hard-pan" that they will produce nothing? Does he realise that the water in California generally is so bad, so saturated with chemical matter, that much of it is scarcely fit for domestic uses, and often absolutely unhealthy; that a large proportion of the invalids who visit the many hot springs of the State, are suffering from malaria and diseases that are the direct or indirect result of the water, or the climate of the interior? Of the illimitable miles which are so infested with ground squirrels as to be useless for agricultural purposes? Is he invited to consider the question of railway freightage, water rates (on irrigated land) or the expense of pumping one's own supply? the insupportable droughts, the "slack feeling" which even the Native Son has not yet grown accustomed to; the eternal jobbery that is for ever going on with marketable goods by stockbrokers, "rings," and trusts; the heavy cost of labour, and its uncertainty; the spring frosts, diseases of fruit, and a thousand other things? Are any of these matters ever mentioned in the pamphlets or papers one picks up in California? Not they. The press hides them from view. The real estate man sticks his head in the sand, and has never heard of them. The pamphleteer in the pay of the railway company, or Chamber of Commerce, is perhaps the most straightforward, for he openly and cheerfully lies. The entire country—for every man and woman in it, save aliens and new-comers, are self-interested in real estate—conspires to cover the bad, and extravagantly extol the good points of

the land, so that they may catch the tourist and entrap the adventurous tenderfoot. The whole affair is a great game, its methods sauced with dishonesty, gambling, and misrepresentation, its motive—graft. And there is no one of any importance who can controvert a single statement I have made. As a matter of fact, the educated know only too well how matters stand, and out of a bundle of notes, I take one at random, which will help to show that I am not moved by any sort of prejudice.

A few months ago President Penrose of Whitman College, Washington, said in the course of a public speech: "Our national life is characterised by graft and corruption. We have the worst-managed cities in the world. We are made the laughing-stock and the shame of nations . . ."

"Yes, sir," though I cannot speak for the whole of America, I know that the state of California is rotten at the core. The land is stained deep with the stain of misrepresentation and graft. Hence my main reason for touching upon the subject at all, is to warn the intending settler to look out for snakes in the grass. I care not to what nationality he belongs. For, having seen young men of many countries broken (in more ways than one) and disappointed, their money gone, tramping the roads for work and finding none, I make no apology for devoting considerable space to the subject. Never myself having sought employment, I can speak of these things from the point of view of an entirely unprejudiced observer, who has no personal grievance to ventilate.

California offers many opportunities to ex-

perienced hands with capital, knowledge, and plenty of shrewd common sense, and a square jaw, just as does any other State of the Union, Canada, Australia, or England for that matter, but it is not an El Dorado, a land flowing with milk and honey, where fortunes may be picked up like mushrooms.

I am convinced that if an intending settler, equipped with the above qualifications, were to exercise his energies and his money in the Mother Country, he would often get on quite as well, and have infinitely more comfort in life than out West. Many a man loses his capital, his nationality, and his self-reliance, by chasing a Will-o'-the-wisp round the world, only to return home totally unfit to take up the old work where he left off. Travel, by all means, with the object of learning the ways of others, of broadening one's outlook on life. But to wander away to the uttermost parts of the earth with the often erroneous conviction that there, in some unknown, remote spot, fortune is waiting, is a policy that too often ends in disappointment, if nothing worse.

"Ah, but think of the freer life, the better wages, the wider scope," we may be told. These things are largely the fruit of imagination. Taking California as an example, I deny most emphatically that it offers as much freedom to the intending settler as can be offered by any English farming county. The man who goes in for ranch-life in the West will find that riding soon loses its charm, for he gets too much of it; that the game he expected to shoot is scarcer than it is in England (often non-existent); that the trout-streams are frequently hundreds of miles away, that he has

to pay licences for his dog and his gun (and these are often heavier than he has ever paid before) ; that there is a tax upon his own head (poll-tax), and scores of others, especially if he goes into business. He will find that he is hemmed in by a multitude of laws, that companionship, save that of the despised Italian or Mexican labourer, is very rare, that home comforts are almost unknown, the life rough and hard, and the climate often unhealthy. To put it in another way, he soon becomes conscious of the fact that he is one of the " ninety-two million goats which are milked by the trusts " year in and year out—a bondsman of the tribe of Gibeon.

From the point of view of the wage-earner, it may sound a fine thing to some to be able to net an income of two to three dollars a day, but is the average worker in the West any better off at the end of the year than his equal in England ? I doubt it. The American workman is anything but thrifty. To save a few dollars is not his principle. Money is made for speculation, and he is ever " taking chances " with his earnings, which keeps him in a condition of nervous uncertainty and restlessness. The settler soon becomes obsessed with the same craze, which leaves him like the Irishman's pig, one day fat, the next day lean ; or, in other words, streaky. Perhaps an exception might be made of the Scot settler, who, discreet, saving, thorough, patient and close, will make his pile wherever he goes, and either return home a rich man or rise to a prominent position in life where he is. In neither one nor the other does he earn the love of his fellow-man out West.

But, as a general rule, the wage-earner or settler is soon parted from his money in California, especially if he be too honest. It is not that the cost of living is much, if any, dearer than it is in England, but it is in the nature of the Westerner to spend. Money, being more easily gained, loses its value, and there are few who, after months of weary isolation at some far-away mine, mountain sawmill, or lonely ranch, do not flee, at intervals, to the nearest city, and there dissipate their earnings in delicious abandonment to ease and pleasure. And who, knowing the depressing influence of their colourless, work-a-day lives, can raise a finger in reproach ?

To the question of sport, as one of the many baits thrown out to the intending settler, I will refer later. But that want of homeliness, general comfort, and diversion which becomes the lot of the settler in the wide acres of the West, is a subject that calls for further reference.

I have travelled far, but never have I met more homesick people than in California. On the ranch and in the store, on the road, in the street car, everywhere, one hears the same tale of discontent, sees the same shrug of the shoulders when any question relating to prosperity is mentioned. There are prevailing symptoms of uncertainty, instability, unrest on all sides. People are always wondering what is going to happen to-morrow, instead of working solidly, contentedly, towards some definite end to-day. To leave one county or state and try another is the all-absorbing craze. Ferment and flux are the abiding influences, ever uppermost in the minds of the country people.

I was camping for the night one evening in June, at the foot of a long, steep hill to the south of Petaluma. There was a "crik" and firewood close by, both of which I knew would be welcomed when darkness fell, by the "hobos," and other members of that stream of humanity which is ever flowing to and fro on the highways of California. The only one, of the many who gathered there that evening, who need be mentioned here, was an old Irishman of nearly seventy years. He came slowly down the long, white, burning road, his boots in his hand, his bed—a quilt—rolled up on his back. Placing the bundle in the shade by my tent, he fell to talking, and told me his tale. It proved to be one of scores of others who swarmed into California forty or more years ago. He had done a little of almost every conceivable form of work. He had made money and lost it—had enjoyed years of fatness, invested, and again lost all, and now he endured the lean seasons as best he might. He had wandered about the country for forty years, yet had remained an Irishman, to whom the brogue still stuck, as sticks the lichen to a rock. He at least had preserved his nationality—a far-off comfort it is true—but what had he gained? In his own words, "divvle a bit." Every week he read on the back page of the *San Francisco Examiner*, whenever he could get it, the British news, following even the politics. For, after two-score years, he was still hankering after a taste, a flavour, of the old life. What he said about America—but mainly of California—is best left unprinted. But I was surprised to hear him, with some vehemence, make the statement:

" The English is the foinest Government in the world, and O'im an Irishman and a Catholic as ses so. . . . In this counthry there's not an honest man from the president to the pound-masther." He was clean, shaven and respectable. On his wanderings from one job to another people gave him food. Of inhospitality at the hands of the ranchers, he never complained—for did he not carry his bed with him, a thing the professional " hobo " (tramp) never does. It was his badge of respectability.

Summer after summer, as haymaker, fruit-gatherer, or packer, he trudged the same weary miles, turning up at his appointed hour with the regularity of the seasons which guided his steps. In good times he had earned as much as three dollars a day. Now he was getting older, and employers all asked for yellow labour (which they theoretically so abhor), and one dollar was his average wage. Thus, at the coming of autumn, with what was left of his summer's meagre earnings, he takes himself to El Pizmo, a tiny village on the sea, where he picks up clams from among the rocks at low water, selling them to the clam cannery there for a trifle. Spring returns, and once again he makes his way on foot for hundreds of oft-trod miles to where the apricots are getting ready for gathering, and the summer's round begins over again. But one day the people of Pizmo will look for his return when the hills grow green in the first rains of autumn, and he will never come. The potter's field, which claims such a terrible proportion of America's millions, will have opened its gate for one more lonely occupant.

Sentiment! It may be, but nevertheless a faithful epitome of what is happening to hundreds of lives, in a country which calls itself a democracy, and which clamours so loudly, so persistently for more men and women, more lives to squander away on the fruits of illusion. That old man was no beggar. There was none of your "God bless you, kind, kind gentleman" about him. But full of a pride that he would not sacrifice for money, he scorned assistance. Thus, early next morning, when he again sat on his bundle by my tent, it was not without a gratitude which was blent with something like shame, not until he assured me that he had breakfasted, when I knew he had not done so, save on a piece of bread and some water, that he would accept my proffered offerings towards a more substantial meal. He was not, by any means, the only one of his sort which I came across on my wanderings, but he was the saddest old man I have ever met. And when I "pulled out" that morning, when I had gone some miles along that straight, sunlit road, he was still sitting on his bundle as I had left him, a dim speck in that vast plain.

Another wanderer I came across near Santa Margarita. He was a much younger man, of Scottish-Irish parents, who had left Ulster as a lad and worked his way across the Continent to California. When I saw him he had just come from Bakersfield, had crossed the Tulare Desert, with its "horrible lot of rattlesnakes and fierce heat," and was heading for San Luis Obispo with his team and wagon to look for a hauling job. Though he was a man of a different type to the old Irish-

man, he expressed sentiments which were of a similar sort. " A labourer on a pound a week in the old country is a more contented man than he is here on twice as much," he said. " He does have a black suit and his Sundays. And there's a country fair once in a while to go to, and a good old-fashioned country pub. where he can sit down comfortably with his neighbours, who are not in such a divvle of a hurry about nothing, as the boys over here are."

He, too, had learned that big wages cannot purchase those domestic comforts and social pleasures—poor, meagre things as they often are—which he had forsaken for a visionary fortune six thousand miles away. He, too, like many another, yearned to get away from the deadening monotony, the set routine, of Western life, which had enmeshed his freedom of spirit and starved his soul.

Such instances could be multiplied to almost any extent. I do not say that California is any worse than many another place which cries out for labourers to fill an already overflowing market. I do not pretend that there are no " tramps "—work-shys—save in America (though that country seems to possess a larger proportion of the species than most others). It is not to tramps, pariahs, and ne'er-do-wells that I refer. But I do protest against the issue of those misleading pamphlets, those highly-seasoned baits and cunning devices which are scattered over Europe to entrap the unwary, and make discontent more discontented.

We, in England—and some other nations—endeavour to intercept the seducing literature

pertaining to Hungarian lotteries and such things of the sort. Then why not intercept also the fruit of these unscrupulous pamphleteers? America is keen, even to excess, to put down anything in the nature of gambling. Yet the bare-faced villainy of the landsharks is permitted to continue unchecked. Spurious literature is distributed broadcast by self-interested speculators, money-lenders, railway magnates, and town-planning syndicates. No effort is spared to induce anyone who has money to "go West." To the *bona-fide* tourist I shall refer again. But I repeat that the schemes adopted by the "public spirited" sons of the West to entice the owner of a few dollars to part with them, are every bit as demoralising as that horse-racing, prize-fighting, and drinking which the American puts down with a hand of autocratic tyranny as often as he can.

If the Briton, Scandinavian, Dane, or Frenchman knew that expatriation to the Far West meant all that I have endeavoured to show, if he realised that under those alluring skies he must give up all that he has ever held most dear—his liberty; if he knew that he would be hemmed in by an ever-tightening cordon of taxation, by an interminable array of laws, many of which are a direct inheritance from the Pilgrim Fathers, and are just about as reasonable as the laws of Moses would be if applied in these days; if he were aware that the old precept, "Live and let live," is unknown in the land of the free; that Demos, in America at any rate, is a false god; that there is more oppression dealt out by the plutocrats of the States than there is in any country of Europe

—bar Russia; that the American looks upon every alien with distrust and contumely, I think they would stay at home and make the best of things.

The only really contented man who I can at the moment recall as having seen on my wanderings in California—excepting Catalina—was an old half-breed at El Pizmo. He had made his living by fishing and picking up clams, and with the shells of the latter his tiny cottage was decorated inside and out. One day, when hauling in his nets, he fished out the corpse of a young man, for the recovery of which he received a reward of seventy-five dollars. On the strength of that splendid sum he immediately decided to retire into private life, and, selling his boat, lines, nets, and all other effects pertaining to his craft to an Italian, he retreated into his little cottage—a happy man. He told me that, although the Italian stubbornly refused to pay any goodwill, out of consideration for the splendid success which fell to his predecessor's net, the Dago still nourishes the hope that he also may one day fish out an equally great catch, and follow the dusky old half-breed into the solace of retirement.

This reference to clams reminds me that the vacated shell of that esteemed mollusc has recently become an article of commerce. It came about in this way. For a long time the clam has been canned, the shells being, for the most part, cast away as useless. But the epicures of restaurant and railroad dining-car, who are very fond of clam, have lately begun to ask for the real thing, instead of the shell-less specimen, embalmed in a tin can

and served up without the romantic flavour of the sea upon it.

"Sure, sir!" says the obliging waiter in response to the demand for clam *in the shell.* "I figured you preferred the canned variety."

And, with his tongue in his cheek, he retires to the kitchen, ladles a clam out of its can, tucks it comfortably into a shell (some stranger's home that has been shipped from Pizmo for the purpose) and presents it with a bland smile to his patron.

That is how it is done, and I would not have been so unkind as to give the show away and, by so doing, rob the feast of its flavour, had I not been assured that people who eat clams—and there are many in the West—are now getting even with those who serve them, by demanding that the mollusc shall henceforth be served adhering to its own shell. To make matters doubly safe the gourmet, when he has extracted the protesting clam and devoured it, either pockets the shells or throws them out of the window. Of course, the head waiter is personally insulted, but who cares? Furthermore, it is more than likely that he will yet have his revenge by adopting some subtle glue with which a canned clam will stick to a shell that is not its own, as by a ligament of nature's own making.

But I wander, and invite thee, reader, to turn to pages of a different sort, from a chapter, which, in places, may seem to have been written by one possessed of what the Book of Common Prayer calls "a notoriously evil liver," though I would not "lure it back to cancel half a line."

CHAPTER IV

THE WESTERNER'S "HOME"

THERE is, perhaps, no country in the wide world where the word home means so little as it does in the newer regions of America. The traveller, it is true, may often be informed that this place or that is a "city of homes," but he very quickly discovers that the term bears no real significance whatsoever. Of course, one does not expect to find, in the West, houses which have been tenanted from father to son for generations, and which have come to be looked upon as family possessions. But, making full allowance for the youthfulness of the country, we still find that there is no desire on the part of those who make themselves "homes" to build for those who will come after them. We may observe in Pasadena, San Mateo, and a hundred other places, the building of houses which, if a trifle cardboardy, are pretty and homely enough in outward appearance, as well as inside. We may see them surrounded by wonderful lawns, rare flowers and trees, by all the luxury that money can buy. And, with our minds dwelling upon that instinctive love which holds the French peasant or English yeoman to the soil which his ancestors have trod, we may extend a hand of sympathy to those who have created such charming places. Our musing,

however, is somewhat rudely shaken when we discover that the very "home" we have most admired is for sale. Passing on, we find that the next, and the next, are also in the market, and, finally, we are forced to conclude that, after all, these homes are, nine times out of ten, marketable commodities, that each one has its price, that they are no more to their owners than the orange orchard or vinery which, whether matured or not, only waits a buyer.

I was once hospitably entertained by a Native Son at a home which he had made for himself and family in the Salinas Valley. No man could have taken greater pride in his house and gardens than he took. In the midst of a windswept country he had built a snug retreat. He had watched the cypress hedge, thick and warm, grow up to screen his trees and flowers from the eternal "trades." There was not a tree or plant which he did not know and care for as though it were a member of his own family, and the earth had rewarded him with her best. He was, I thought, one of the most settled men I had met in California, and his wife and daughter shared his contentment. Only when I was leaving were my dreams, my "old-fashioned English ideas," somewhat abruptly shattered. There was a row of fan palms, just planted, along the front of the garden which bordered on the road, and I asked my genial acquaintance why he had put them there, for one gets rather tired of palms in Southern California, and there are many trees which, to my mind, are more useful and characteristic of the country.

"Well, you know," he responded, "when people

from back East come over here they like to see palms about, for it means the climate's right . . . and they are the buyers after all."

"But you wouldn't sell a place which you admit has given you such happiness and contentment," I protested.

He threw up his hands with a gesture and winked an eye, muttering something to the effect that it was not in him to refuse a good figure—an outside price—if he had the offer.

And there you have one aspect of the affair in a nutshell.

There may be, and sometimes is, as was the case with my friend, an honest, instinctive love of home, as the European understands the term. But, generally, there is ever that "little rift within the lute" which widens with the increasing value of the place, so that, finally, the dollar—the eternal dollar—conquers. Then the embryo, the nucleus, of home-life is sold out, ere it has taken root in the soil.

This instability of the home, which ought to be the cradle of youth and the arm-chair of old age in the fostering of a nation's family life, is so conspicuous a feature among the Western towns that one scarcely wonders at the constant state of flux in which the whole country exists. Nobody is satisfied with anything. Everybody is being swept hither and thither on the restless winds of uncertainty and doubt. To live intensely, rather than comfortably, would appear to be the universal desire. And the stranger, who has been brought up in the belief that the family tie is the bedrock upon which nations are built, who knows that

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A LOS ANGELES "HOME"

nations are not created by roving adventurers who make their fortunes in a day and dissipate them in an hour, is constrained to probe the matter farther.

What influence is it that urges a man or woman to sell the roof over their heads, or the ground under their feet? Granted that the love of the dollar is paramount, is that enough to explain this condition of affairs? Is the sport of gambling with the roof-tree sufficiently exciting to cause the family ship to drift for ever from one temporary anchorage to another? Doubtless these things do their share in stimulating that universal state of effervescence which is characteristic of America; they are hands in the game of avarice, greed, and beggar-my-neighbour, without which your average Westerner would be a lonely and rather unhappy man. Unhappy because, having no other interest or occupation, he must be "figuring out" some scheme by which he may make or lose a few dollars or perish of *ennui*. And it is not in his nature to rust.

But, quite apart from the pursuit of the dollar in any form, the Western American is a gypsy at bottom, a born wanderer. The very fact that he is where he is substantiates the statement. The prairie schooner was his cradle. His ancestors were of the tribe of Esau. Home to them, in the pioneer days, was merely a resting-place for the night, a place never to be seen again. And your Californian to-day, more especially in rural districts, is ever being plucked at the elbow by that same instinct to roam, which first inspired his forefathers to cross the ocean and the plain.

It can scarcely be wondered at, therefore, that a man who is a speculator at heart and a vagrant by circumstances, is liable to be bored by what is known as home-life. There is plenty of time for that, he tells you, when the age of slippered pantaloons comes along (not that he gets it even then), with the result that the home becomes a mere name, and he scrambles through life in the razzle-dazzle of the streets, the restaurant, and the hotel. Why, to him, the vision of a faithful wife darning socks over an evening fire is unthinkable. It would drive him to drink, or send him reeling to a typewriter or a telephone bell for company. Not that Jonathan is in any sense averse from virtuous domesticity in itself, but that state of human passivity usually associated with darning and socks gets on his nerves.

And this brings me to a brief consideration of Mrs. Jonathan and the influence which she, unconsciously or otherwise, exerts in matters domestic. A man of Irish extraction to whom I was speaking on this subject, and who had lived most of his life in California, summed up his impression of life in the Golden State thus: "There are some parts of the country which are as good as anywhere else for a man to live in, but it's no place for a woman. The life's too hard. It's next to impossible to get assistance in the house, and I should be sorry to see a wife of mine scrubbing the floor. If I ever make a pile I shall go back to the old country, find a nice girl, marry her, if she'll have me, and settle down."

And herein lies another key of explanation to the home problem. The "slavey" is practi-

cally non-existent. To be a "hired girl" is to be branded with a social stigma that smacks of servility. And rather than become a domestic servant at ten dollars a week, with board and lodging thrown in, there are thousands of women and girls in this enlightened land who prefer to serve in a store for half as much, and find their own living out, or join the thronging service of the streets. That is what democracy, or what passes for it, has done for the "slavey." Not that she is alone in her antipathy towards "servility." It pervades all kinds of people in this land of the free, who are oblivious of the fact that the most honourable of all callings should be the service of another, and forgetful that every being, from the President of the Union down to Uncle Sam's humblest subject, lives but to wait on and serve his neighbour. But the sons of America are too often engrossed with their own selfish aims and ambitions to view these things in an honest, open light.

However, it comes to this, Mrs. Jonathan, unless she is passing rich, must wash the dishes herself, or get her daughters, if she has any, to do it for her. And she doesn't like it. Her daughters don't like it, and, as a matter of fact, they all dislike it just about as much as Jonathan himself would, had he to do it. But if democracy does not help such matters to run smooth, the restaurants do. They are moderately cheap and convenient. Furthermore, Mrs. Jonathan and all other grown-up female members of the household, quite apart from any question of scrubbing and washing, are no less anxious to get to the office

stool than is their sire. To the last they say, "where thou goest we will go." And they go. It pays better to tap the keys of a typewriter, to become a barber or a policeman, to serve candy, to do a hundred other things, than to mind baby, so that the home often becomes a mere lodging for the night, in which even the weekly rest that Sunday suggests is often absent. Not only does the unreasoning attitude towards servility undermine domestic comfort, not only has that struggle for supremacy which has arisen between man and woman in the workaday world so effectually helped to crush home-life in the West, but it has very materially diminished that instinctive respect which civilised man has always had for woman. The American, in the West, at any rate, now treats the latter more as if she were one of his own sex.

"If equality of the sexes is what you ask," says the male, "you shall have it." But when she gets it, she is still feminine enough to be inconsistent and to complain that, in gaining equality, she has lost the honour which is her due. But what else can she expect! She, who is ready to hustle in those fields of labour which man, as the bread-winner, has occupied unchallenged for so long; she, who is prepared to unceremoniously shoulder the clerk from his stool, the merchant from his office, the doctor from his profession, the barber from his saloon, the very parson from his pulpit; who hesitates not to usurp any position which has been the assumed birthright of man from the beginning of history! Does this divine American woman earn the homage which she pretends to scorn, but which at heart she loveth exceeding

well, by competing, bullying, and under-selling in the market-place of labour? Are we to believe that she is still a princess in a land of chivalry, that a hundred gallants will lay down their cloaks at her approach, that her dainty feet may cross the mire unspoiled? Can she barter her sex away for a mess of silver and remain a woman? By Ambition fell the angels. . . .

But rather than indulge in flights of hyperbole, rather than hear the arguments from the male side, and an English male at that, let us go to the other platform and draw some conclusions from the woman's point of view.

We have seen that she has put the spinning-wheel away in the attic (if they have attics in California), put the nursery out of her mind, and thrown in her lot with the male of her species in that all-absorbing, national struggle, the chase of the dollar. No matter how much some of us may object, either in theory or practice, to her competition with man, her greatest opponents cannot but award her every credit for her ability, push, and perseverance. She has "got on." No one will question that, and it is within the bounds of possibility that industrial America in the West to-day—if not in the East—would not have attained its present status without her. But that is by the way. It has been suggested that, by vacating the home for the office, she has been one of the prime movers in the breaking up of family life. Now, I have heard it argued, by way of extenuation, that the women of the West have so far devoted their lives and their energies, not for personal gain, but solely to the object of further-

ing the welfare of a country that was young and short-handed, and that the neglected family matters would, in the end, readjust themselves or, in that unconvincing phrase, work out their own salvation.

Frankly, I believe neither one nor the other. But I do say (and at least I have my opportunity here for some words of atonement for anything which I may have said in accusation of the fair), that they who discredit woman's ability in the field of work, and who theoretically condemn her presence there, should remember that there are some extenuating circumstances other than the above to be considered on her behalf. She has not been, and is not always, obsessed purely by the scent of the dollar. Avarice and greed, an independent income of her own, or uncontrollable ambition are not the sole factors which have seduced her from the domestic hearth.

Granted that they have been not unimportant movers in shaping her destiny, there is also much to be said, in mitigation of the charges brought against her, by openly facing the fact that the stay-at-home life of the average Western girl has ever been, and (if she still puts up with it), is now, insufferably dull. When she has left school, and the pretty hair-ribbons are laid aside for ever, she almost invariably becomes a reflection of her life, which is dismal, colourless, and void. Her parents are too occupied with other things to bother about the choice of her companions, or to get up entertainments which are comparatively rare events at her age. She has never been brought up to do anything as a pastime or hobby. To

work carpet slippers for curates does not come within her radius. Photography soon loses its zest, because in it she does not do more than squeeze the bulb, leaving the rest of the work to the chemist. As an "out-door girl" she may get "lots of fun" on horseback and in other athletic exercises, but these things do not occupy anything like such a large part of her life as we are led to suppose they do. Rather than satisfy her ambitious, rebellious spirit, they more often stimulate it for further energies in a wider sphere.

She has not even got a grandmother (an uncommon relation in Western America) to bore her with such elegant exercises as the repetition of —"Papa, potatoes, prunes, prisms—To train the lips, my dear." She has nothing to kick against now that the shins of "teacher" become a dimmer memory day by day—save an encroaching fog of dullness which threatens to engulf her spirit. Like an imprisoned bird . . . (no, that will never do) like one of Milton's lions at the creation, she paws to be free! Her redundant energies must have a big outlet somewhere, and it is, therefore, the most natural thing in the world that she should follow her parents and her brothers to the office or the counter. It is her only safeguard against that drab existence for which the woman of the West is doomed, if she stays at home. And so morally bad is the dullness of this home-life, bad because it leads to disappointment and slackness, bad because it makes hands idle, and we know what Satan does with them, bad because it tends to encourage domestic disruption, that I am not sure it is not the worst of the two

evils after all. It may be that a reaction (of which vague rumours have already come to my ears) will set in against such long hours of strenuous work, and in favour of a wider recognition of the value of home-life, as distinct from hotel life, to a nation's welfare. This may some day tend to remedy matters.

But, meanwhile, what of the race? If the American wife keeps her family down to one or two, or dispenses with motherhood altogether, it means that the birth-rate of purely American children will go on decreasing, while not only is that of the alien on the upgrade, but immigration is flooding the States with foreigners. From the Occident and the Orient, the stream of alien humanity continues to pour into the continent, until it, the latter, has become a mere "parcel of vain strivings tied by a chance bond together." The American woman has become a bread-winner, rather than a begetter of children, and the words, family and home, are mere figments of memory half forgotten.

It is, however, no place to discuss that matter. If there is to be any improvement made in this aspect of affairs, it must spring spontaneously from the people themselves. And, as I have said, there are not wanting signs of revolt against what one may call the artificiality of the present life. Education, in which the American—like all *bourgeois* people—places so much faith, will no more teach a nation the duties of home-life and motherhood, than will the marriage service. Indeed, everything goes to prove that the effect is just the reverse. Family life must grow as a seed

grows. It must have its roots deep down in the kindly soil of unselfishness, and be nourished by the mutual affection of its members. No product of an hour or a day, to be hustled hither and thither by the distracting elements of a city's turmoil, it can exist only in the generous sunshine of a community that breathes an air uncontaminated by self-interest, self-conceit and the worship of mammon.

Now the "Society ladies," in a word, those who do no work, are scorned by the average Western woman. (Why, I could never fully understand.) Yet these same "Society" people, even though they do not beget babies oftener than they can help, do appear to get something out of life, even if that something be no more than what the newspapers call "an affair." To discuss Marcus Aurelius, sandwiched between ice-cream and the gossip columns of a Sunday press, to take tea at four o'clock, "talk art," and do many other things, not because you like doing them or understand them, but because they are the "right things" to do, may not be a very laudatory ambition, but they are harmless enough and apparently entertaining enough. They help to promote sociability and mutual intercourse, as the parsons say.

But if all the factors which I have named, and there are others, have had a detrimental influence upon domestic contentment in this country, their effect is even more distinctly marked in the children. I am aware that the manners of English children nowadays are not so perfect that we can allow ourselves to be pharisaical about those of other lands, but they are angelic compared with

the offspring which grow under California's sun. The latter are all that children should not be in behaviour. They respect neither parents nor age. They know no discipline, observe no restraint. A child of three or four will brag about the money which "Pop" possesses; its toys are valued according to their cost. Born snobs, with a dash of the hooligan thrown in, they will, when quite young, tell the stranger that "Popper" paid so much for this or that piece of furniture, and that the said "Pop" is not without an automobile because he cannot afford to buy one! He just doesn't want one. They revel in disrespect for everything save money, and the latter, or that which it represents, is their one and only idol.

Their "smartness" is applauded by the parents, their vulgarity and illimitable insolence passes uncorrected. They are cruel, not, perhaps, naturally, but because they have never been shown the cowardliness and sin of cruelty; but their most characteristic feature is an uncouth roughness of manner, an unbridled pertinacity, and a conceit of themselves which knows no bounds. In the school, and often in the home, the rod is spared with the proverbial result. The hands of the teacher (often a woman in rural schools, and, as a disciplinarian, a farce) are tied by a grandmotherly legislature, and the influence of the home, as I have suggested, is an influence for evil rather than good. But, in all fairness, it is only just to state that in matters of cleanliness, neatness, and dress these children, more especially the girls, excel any others of a similar class which I

have come across in Europe. This is another example of America's curious contrasts. Their frocks are pretty, bright-coloured and clean, their feet shod in shining, neat-fitting boots, while the annual expenditure in the conspicuous "hair-ribbons" which, tied into large bows, take the place of hats, must alone amount to nearly as much as many parents in the Old World spend upon the entire dressing of a child.

Perhaps, seeing that "Cleanliness is next to Godliness," we ought to be thankful that these children have attained a state of perfection, which is next in order to the desired goal. But until they mend their manners, the latter will, for a long time, remain out of reach. Why, in the name of all that is holy, do not those mothers who minister to the outward and visible signs of grace in their offspring, go a little deeper and erase the baseness of manner which blemishes the youngsters' souls?

But, if it is true that the manners of the children are a reflection of those of the parents, and I think it is, then the sooner "Popper" and "Mommer" set the example, instead of the pace, the better it will be for everybody. They might, as a beginning, learn to make use of those simple rudiments of grace, "Please" and "Thank you"—uncommon words in America—which the youngsters would soon pick up.

It is not so much a question of the rod, which is going out of fashion, as it is of precept. To obtain respect one must first be respectable. Every schoolmaster worthy of the profession, to which the great Arnold belonged, knows that. And

when family life becomes more of a reality, more domestic, in the best sense of the word; when parents are unselfish enough to realise that the spending of their lives in the pursuit of the dollar or other selfish ends means nothing more nor less than the moral murder of their children; when a man (or woman) has enough courage to admit that he is a greater slave to his business than ever a nigger was to his owner, then, and not before, will be the opportunity for the child to come into its own.

Nevertheless, when the worst has been said against the American child, who is a victim of circumstances, there remains a better side to the picture. If the American boy and girl are chips of the old block, they inherit the good, no less than the questionable, characteristics of their parents. They are wonderfully self-reliant, and possess an initiative and resourcefulness far beyond their years. To see a small boy of four chopping wood for his mother with a full-sized axe, which he handled as though by instinct taught, was to me a revelation. Another lad of ten, whom I knew, could be relied upon to catch a "mess of fish" for the family supper; and that he could shoot a deer was not the surprise to his father that it was to me. In California the precocity is, perhaps, even more marked than in most States of the Union. There the girls often mature at the age of ten to twelve, and one rarely opens a newspaper without reading an account of an "elopement" between two children, whose combined ages perhaps amount to no more than twenty-six years! But, while this early maturity is thus apt to lead

the youngsters astray at an age when most English children are scarcely out of leading-strings, while boy "hunters" often come to grief through carelessness with guns, it is, on the whole, a not undesirable characteristic. This sort of precocity in the child is the nucleus of much that is admirable in the adult. It is the kernel of that cleverness, resourcefulness, and virile activity which has made America what it is.

In a country where the matrimonial knot is frequently apt to slip, and where a third, fourth, or fifth wife, or husband, is not an uncommon object, domestic disruptions between fragments of the disunited members and the reigning family are frequent. The following illustration will explain what I wish to convey. I was camping one evening upon a ranch, and was disturbed by such sounds of domestic strife among the children of the place that, notwithstanding a double blanket drawn over my ears, I ultimately went asleep dreaming of Mexican fandangoes, child murder, Indian pow-wows, and a host of all the rowdiest, most horrible things I could imagine. The following morning I had the curiosity to ask the owner of the ranch what had created so much noise. He was evidently accustomed to it, for he smiled and said :

" Well, you see, we are three families. And my wife's children sometimes get a-scrapping with my kids, mine keep agoin' for hers, and I reckon ours was joining in."

It turned out that the combined army numbered eight, the majority all being about the same age.

CHAPTER V

SOME MORALS AND MANNERS

One is accustomed to hearing a good deal about the beauty of American women, i.e. the women of the Eastern States. Doubtless, they can, to say the least, hold their own with those of other countries in that respect ; though to my mind a hardness and impassiveness of expression, plus a somewhat tepid complexion, too often mar a lovely face. Now the Girl of the Golden Waist, as someone, parodying the title of a popular play, has called the Native Daughter of California, is of a different mould. She matures, as we have seen, at a much earlier age, gets more open air, and lives more of a tom-boy life than her sister in the East. Astride a Mexican saddle she looks very much at her ease as she lopes along in the peculiar canter of the country. The dry, hot climate does not improve her complexion or her hair, but, on the other hand, she would seem to have absorbed into her nature some of the sunshine of her cloudless skies. Capable, resourceful, optimistic, and ofttimes rebellious when anything stands in the way of her intentions, she successfully makes her own way, and that, after all, is the main object in every Western man or woman's life.

If we were to compare the Californian woman, as one sees her in her everyday life of the city,

and I am speaking of the class that makes up the vast majority, with those holding a similar position in Europe, we should find that the former strikes one as being infinitely neater in dress, more graceful in movement. You will seldom see in any of these Western towns (or, I think, in the East) the untidy, drabby specimens of womanhood which one so often meets in, say, the streets of an English city. Whether they are serving in a store, as typewriters, book-keepers, or in any other business, they will always be neatly clad. Their clothes do not wear a "put on anyhow" appearance, and their feet are always elegantly and yet sensibly shod. Nor will you see rounded backs, hollow chests, bad teeth, and a slovenly carriage. The Western girls, though they may often be small in stature, frequently appear shorter than they really are because of a shoulder and chest development of quite extraordinary proportions. In this respect, no less than in the freedom and vigour of their movements, they would be a terrible shock to people who might still cling to a liking for the drooping shoulders and shrinking amiability of the early Victorian miss. True, the Native Daughters tinker with their complexions and elaborate their hair, the latter until it has become like unto that which never was on sea or land, but they are never frowsy. Yet, these same women, when at home, will cast aside all their nice orderliness and wear anything. A "house dress" is the favourite garb, and it consists of an affair which looks like a dressing-gown, but which is called a "kimono." It does long and faithful service. Thus, to see her at her best, you must observe the Western girl when she turns

out to business of a morning. She keeps her good taste, her finest clothes, her best complexion, for strangers' eyes, and perhaps this fact may help to explain the absence of matrimonial bliss in the El Dorado State.

Western parents make a good deal of the theory that the more their boys and girls are thrown upon each other's society without restraint, the less fear will there be of any slackening of sexual morality. There is much to be said on behalf of the theory, but, from what I have seen and heard, and from what the newspapers, magazines, and books say, the result in practice of this free intercourse is anything but wholesome. To say that, in America, "any young woman can walk out in the streets alone at night without fear of discomfort," depends upon what happens to be one's estimation of "discomfort." Taken in the ordinary, literal sense the statement is moonshine. It is more than probable that that very freedom of intercourse, which is propounded as a safeguard of morality, may be the very factor which disintegrates the foundations of honour between the sexes. Indeed, we know that it is often so, that it breeds a mutual familiarity which may best be epitomised in the lines of Pope :

> Oh happy state! Where souls each other draw,
> Where love is liberty, and Nature law.

The ostensible result is so-called "platonic friendships," a scorn of marriage, and a lowering birth-rate.

Not very long ago I heard of an instance which throws a terrible, unpitying light upon this question. Half a dozen people—three young men and

three girls—were returning after supper from a motor drive in the country. When taking a bend the car skidded, pitched over a bank into a river, and all but one of the occupants were drowned. When the news of the tragedy got abroad, and the bodies of the victims had been taken to the nearest city, no fewer than one hundred and thirty mothers came to the scene to look for their daughters, of whose whereabouts they were ignorant. The incident bears its own significance and needs no comment from me.

Brother Jonathan is not usually given credit for much emotionalism, or love of the dramatic, but, as a matter of fact, he likes his entertainment, no less than his work, highly spiced with thrills, and if there is a little of the morbid thrown in, so much the better. Things as they are, as I have elsewhere said, he has no use for. But let me give an example to illustrate what I mean by the American's love of thrilling emotionalism.

I once went to hear Mr. Sousa and his " all-wind band " in a Western town. The theatre was packed and the noted band played, with its accustomed skill, the stirring melodies of Wagner, Grieg, and other great composers. The large audience heard these with modified approval. But when Mr. Sousa, after each item of the " classical stuff," drew from his sixty bandsmen the patriotic strains of " Yankee Shuffle," " Stars and Stripes," and " Has anybody here seen Kelly " (with " symphonic variations "), the house rose as one man, and applauded with an uproar that nearly deafened the music. Impatience grew more impatient

as the audience waited for each classical piece to end, when it again burst forth in unrestrained welcome of the popular encore. But the crowning triumph came at the end, during the rendering of "Stars and Stripes," when six cornet, six trombone, and four piccolo players were waved out to the front of the stage by the master's baton. There they stood in a row, and blew as much as they knew how into the faces of an hysterical public. When this was finished, before one's ears had recovered from the dinning, brazen blast, the band restarted, the sixteen heroes of the moment were marched out, and we had it all over again !

This is how the local paper expressed the public feeling next day :

" Educated people may rave over the tremendous artistic legacies left them by such stars as Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Liszt, Schubert, Debussy, and others of that exalted ilk, but everyday Americans, men and women, leaving the busy cares of life for an hour or two to go out for an evening's musical entertainment, have stamped their enthusiastic approval on Sousa's name and have called him FRIEND."

Now that I am on this subject, I am constrained to give the reader an example of the American's love of the morbid sensational. Here, again, the instance is connected with the world of song, though, I am happy to say, I was not present on the occasion referred to. The report is from a Western newspaper, of which I have forgotten the name :

"DEAD MAN SINGS ANTHEM WHILE HIS DEATH IS BEING MOURNED.

"Wm. Faxon's voice was heard yesterday at his own funeral here. While his body lay in a casket, those gathered to pay final tribute heard two hymns by him, and also heard him as one of a trio, including his son and daughter, in sacred song. When the mourners had gathered in the parlor of the Faxon home, in which his open coffin lay, they were surprised to hear his voice pealing an anthem from behind a screen of flowers and palms. Three years ago, believing his life was nearing its close, Faxon conceived the idea of preserving his voice to be a part of the service when he died. He used a phonograph, and the records were reproduced before he was buried. Faxon was ninety years old, and was one of the wealthiest men in the county. He was the first Methodist convert in this district, and built a church for that faith. Almost until the time of his death he participated regularly in the song service."

When one sets foot in a strange country, it is to the newspapers that he first looks for indications which may help him to understand the lives and aspirations of the people whom he has come among. The press mirrors the thoughts, manners, and customs of a people as nothing else can, or, to put it another way, "every nation has the newspapers it deserves." Can one discuss American newspapers as a whole without distinction? It seems to me that it would be scarcely fair to do so, for there are papers in New York which are as far removed from others of the same city as the

London *Times* is from *Ally Sloper*—newspapers which bear the stamp of a literary ability that none can question. Notwithstanding, the generality of American newspapers, if we are to decide by a study of the average sample, have strongly marked and unique characteristics which few people outside the Republic can contemplate with any sort of pleasure or edification. It is almost entirely this class of paper—sensational, morbid, depraved, illiterate, and false—that one meets with in the West ; it is of this type of gutter-press that Mathew Arnold wrote : " If one were searching for the best means to efface and kill in a whole nation the discipline of respect, the feeling for what is elevated, one could not do better than take the American newspapers. The absence of truth and soberness in them, the poverty of serious interest, the personality and sensation-mongering, are beyond belief."

Though America does not tell us any more than it can help about its asylums and penitentiaries, no country boasts more extravagantly about its libraries, its schools and colleges ; no country pretends to have higher ideals of morality than this one. Yet, in the face of all this, we are confronted with a daily press that most countries would not pick up with a pair of tongs. A press that battens on scandal, that considers no incident or gossip of one's family life too private for exposure in its scare-headed columns ; a press that makes of murder and anarchy a heroism, that is alike as ignorant of the law of libel, if there is one, as it is of good taste ; a press that welters in the stews of every imaginable form of human vice, and whose

news-scavengers know no decency, observe no restraint, can have but one influence upon an already morbid and emotional people.

There are, as I have said, Americans who scorn and deplore that sort of thing, and it is only natural that the men of the best ability and culture will have nothing to do with the manufacture of such a press. Just as the sanest, most able men, do not go up to Congress, so the cultured few keep their hands clean of the newspaper taint. If they did contribute to the press, the public would not listen to them. For the papers are, after all, of the people themselves. They are the fruit of a demand. The average American likes these highly-seasoned, shameless newspapers. They stir up within him that melodramatic sense and that taste for sensation for which he craves. He so loves to get his name into these lurid columns that, having failed to do so in any other way, he has been known to commit suicide in order to achieve that notoriety. Another man, with the same object in view, sold his wife. There are some people who pay, and pay heavily, for the privilege of getting their names into the " Society Column " of the Sunday press. On the other hand, so persistent and disgusting is the way in which these newspapers indulge in probing into the domestic affairs of the cultured and better-bred classes, that the latter, from no other reason whatsoever, have often relinquished their nationality and taken refuge in Europe.

In a country, the dominating features of whose people are reflected from the columns of this daily press, one need not expect to look for much hu-

mour. What passes for such in America is irreverence and ridicule. To laugh at the misfortunes of others, to air a contempt for all that is noble and venerable, to sneer and make cheap innuendoes at anything which is beyond their understanding, is taken for humour in America. The Yankee ridicules, where the European venerates ; he jeers, where we worship. And, just as satire and comedy are lost upon children, so they are as pearls before swine with Jonathan. Read Mark Twain and you will at once see how clearly he understood his countrymen's capacity for humour. The American scribe has the pen of a ready writer, and a vocabulary, as well as a germ of dramatic instinct, which will serve him well in the literature of the modern world. But we must wait awhile before his work, good as much of it undoubtedly is, will be leavened with the subtle grace of humour.

By the by, I read recently that the young " high-brows " of the Chicago high schools have, with the complete accord of their learned professors, abolished the works of " one W. Shakespeare," said to be " cheap grand-stand player," and an " immoralist," from their literature classes, and " substituted the works of Ibsen and Shaw." There's nothing like moving with the times.

I once asked a man, who had lived many years in the El Dorado State, why the Californians so often look unhealthy, more especially the men and younger children. He replied, without hesitation, " I think they eat too much." And one need not stay long among them before one is convinced that there is a great deal of truth in the statement. The Californian, it is true, only has

three meals a day ; but the quantity of food—and that often cooked in an oleaginous, German fashion—which he can put away at a sitting, has never failed to astonish me.

Let us take the average man who comes into a restaurant for a twelve o'clock lunch. While he runs his eye over the menu, a glass of iced water is put before him. The order given, he falls to on the bread and butter (generally supplied free with all orders over a quarter) and newspaper. Presently comes a " Porterhouse steak," an awesome thing, weighing about two pounds, which he eats off the dish. Round the latter are scattered sundry dishes of vegetables, German fried potatoes, sliced tomato (well oiled), lettuce (also anointed), a potato and onion salad, a bottle of milk—this sometimes accompanies the soup course, if he takes one—and, as likely as not, a substantial slab of pie. All the things being ready (the vanished pat of butter being replaced by another), our friend bundles his newspaper into his pocket and opens the assault with a vigour and pluck which that formidable steak and its accompanying etceteras demand. But it takes a lot more than that to daunt a Native Son when he is hungry. It takes more than you and me looking at him to put him off his feed. Though the temperature is at ninety-five degrees, he tackles that steak, which is very lightly cooked, and the half-dozen cubic inches of suet, also scarcely warmed through, with an appetite that is, well, let us say, enviable. Along with it he still consumes quantities of bread and butter (lots of butter), and the salads, vegetables, milk, and pie disappear in due order.

There's " somethin' doin' " when the Native Son is at table, and it does not take him many minutes to put away as much as would satisfy three average Europeans. Paying his money at the desk, and taking a toothpick between his impassive lips, he returns to work with the air of one who has achieved something, and he undoubtedly has. There is more than an æsthetic virtue in his " golden smile " after all.

In like manner you may see a young and, perhaps, delicate-looking girl, whose staple diet, so you imagine, might be whitebait and cucumber sandwiches. Nothing of the sort, she squares her shoulders to the " Porterhouse," the bread and butter, the milk, and the rest, and they vanish like an ice. Yet she lives. But, though many of these people exhibit the undoubted symptoms of having eaten not wisely but too well (and the innumerable mineral spring resorts for liver complaints tell their tale), I think it is the young children who suffer most. They have the same long fasts between meals which the older folk have, and gorge themselves with the same kind of food when the meal hours come round. I have seen children of four and five given as much roast pork, beans (cooked with bacon), tomato, and other salads, swimming in the eternal oil, as they care to eat, without mentioning pie, at least twice, and sometimes three times a day—for your American, like the German, enjoys his meat and potato breakfast.

" Little Tommy," said a mother to me one day, " is the only one of the four who hasn't been knifed yet." That all the others had been in

hospital for surgical operations did not seem to strike her as anything out of the common.

The Eastern and mid-Western American doubtless requires more food than do the people, say, of France or England. The climate, and his mode of life, cause his constitution to demand it. But in California it is quite another matter, and, sooner or later, he finds that, while he sticks to the customary routine of his forefathers' tables, his organs of digestion revolt against such treatment in a climate that requires a lighter fare.

The average *à la carte* restaurant, upon which so many Californians depend for their daily meals, is not so good, nor is it as cheap as establishments of a similar level in the East. But, on the whole, I would put them before the middle-class English places. The food is heavy, substantial, and often indifferently cooked, but the variety is infinite. In more expensive restaurants, San Francisco and Los Angeles can possibly attain the excellence of those of the larger Eastern cities. These palaces, however, are only for the few.

Of Western hotels my experience has not been extensive, but from what I do know of them, they are as comfortable as those of any other land, and are equally variable in their charges. Generally speaking, a dollar a day will provide a good room anywhere. The traveller who wishes to pay less must beware, especially in the southern part of the State and 'Frisco ; he can get rooms in plenty at a lower figure, but he will not sleep alone.

The Cafeteria is a popular style of restaurant for those who are not too fastidious, and who have to study economy. Furthermore, it is a triumph

of democracy. Here, at last, you have the real thing of the people for the people, or something very near it. There are no waiters or waitresses, hence there are no tips, and the management contend that, having done away with the formidable expense of labour, it is able to give its patrons better food at a less cost. There are not even menus to print. The daily price list of foods, printed in bold type, is hung up upon the wall, or placed by the door so that all who enter can read it. Along one side of the room, which is set out with tables in the ordinary way, is a long counter. Running parallel to this is a passage wide enough to hold a row of people in single file. At one end, as you enter, you take from among a heap of others, a tray, a napkin, and as many knives, forks, and spoons as you may want, and pass on to the counter. Upon the latter are arranged the dishes of the day, beginning with soup, entrées, and tailing off to coffee. Sliding your tray along upon a raised shelf attached to the counter, you choose just what you have a fancy for. There will be an attendant to serve you with the soup, entrée, and vegetables, which are kept hot from below, but salads, sweets, dessert, bread, etc., are set out, and you help yourself from the bewildering array. At length, having come to the coffee end, a check will be given you for the full amount, and you bear your loaded tray to a table. The food is, in these Cafeterias, always cheap and good. Everything is remarkably clean, and the rooms have none of that stuffiness usually associated with mediocre restaurants.

The experience of manipulating one's own tray

and generally doing the work of the waiter (except that you are not expected to clear up after you have finished) is a curious one to some people, more especially, perhaps, to those Britons who, urged by necessity or curiosity, are only too obviously strangers to the mysteries of the kitchen. The prosaic dignity with which the pompous British "swell" takes up his tray, gathers together with nice discrimination the various items of his meal, and the magnificent air with which he veneers his self-consciousness as he bears that tray away with him to a seat, is a sight worth going a long way to see. But he gets used to it, as he gets used to the initial trials of ski-ing, or any other pursuit which is liable to be, in its early stages, disturbing to one's native dignity. There are some places, notably in Victoria, B.C. (for the Cafeteria is not confined to the States), where he is now ready and willing, without a semblance of any symptoms of offended pride, to line up with the rest and minister to his own fleshly wants with becoming humility.

Although the Californian is ostensibly the last man in the world to submit to any sort of suppression of liberty, we find that he is, nevertheless, the victim of a puritanical tyranny no less rabid, no less unreasonable, than the "Nonconformist conscience" in some parts of Britain. This puritanism is of that hard, unbending sort which, though it may have served well the Pilgrim Fathers, is just about as effectual as a means of grace as the Leviticus would be, did someone try to enforce its ordinances to-day. From its inception in the extreme north-east, it has spread over

a great part of the Union like a blight, suppressing the liberties of the people, smothering their pleasures with the wet blanket of a misguided Sabbatarianism. With one blow it swept horse-racing out of New York State. The tracks were shut down. The breeders, the trainers, and jockeys set sail for England and France. Stud farms were abandoned, and the average price of thoroughbred yearlings fell in a few months from three thousand dollars to one hundred dollars. In a word, horse-breeding and the ancient " sport of kings " were given their *congé*, and New York State has lost somewhere about two and a half million dollars per annum, not to mention its liberty. California, the home of " Lucky Baldwin " and Mr. Leland Stanford, the breeder of " Suñol," the famous trotter, is another State that has been served in precisely the same fashion. While other pastimes, a thousand times more injurious to public morals are, to use a vulgar phrase, " winked at," horse-racing has been wiped out of existence, and with it the noble industry of breeding the noblest of animals.

Having succeeded so far, the next step has been the shutting up of the public-house. Prohibition has not yet subjugated all California (the alien vote stands in the way, out-voting the " petticoats "), but there are whole counties where one cannot openly buy a drink. Quite apart from any question of this autocratic bridling of the people's freedom, this prohibition law is as bad in theory as it is evil in its results. Assuming prohibition to be a means of reform, a greater farce was never instituted in any country. Never did a law bring

about a more profound demoralisation. For, instead of stopping the liquor tap, it has stimulated deceit, nourished hypocrisy, and opened wide the door for illicit indulgence. In every town where prohibition reigns there are " blind pigs " and " speak-easies," where people congregate to drink and gamble, and where, in the absence of any legal authority on the matter, the vilest and most poisonous of bad liquors are dispensed. But a thirsty man need not always slink into the basement of a cigar or barber's shop for his liquor. He can get it imported, sealed up in eggs. Chemists supply it under the name of " hair restorer." You turn on a gas-jet in a private house and find that it responds, not with gas, but with whisky or beer. Or, if you happen to be near the border of a state or county, and have only got to cross the line to enter non-prohibition territory, you can board a train, called the " Grand Drunk," which runs every Sunday morning for the express purpose of satisfying a " long-felt want."

Now, it is easy to see that this sort of thing is degradation made more degraded. The faddists, well-meaning enough no doubt, who are responsible for such a farcical, demoralising condition of affairs, have here, as always, proven themselves to be wholly incapable of dealing with a matter that no one will deny may have required adjustment. They have made clean the outside of the cup and platter, but within it is full of debauchery and excess. In their appalling ignorance of human nature, in their want of balance and sense of proportion, they have not only shown themselves impotent to mitigate the drink evil, but have

made easy the way of crime, and generally loosened the strings of honour and social morality. Yet the Californian suffers himself to be browbeaten and "bossed" by these fanatical reformers. He permits his liberty, manliness, and conscience to be juggled away by a sop of bat-eyed enthusiasts, whose vapid utterances are just about as useful in the cause of morality as would be a shrilling of crickets and a croaking of self-inflated frogs. I am measuring my words, and am not prejudiced one way or another. But I protest against the interference of humbugging zealots, whose short-sighted policy not only breeds iniquity, not only places a ban upon a people's freedom in any country, but who would, if they could, strait-jacket the orbits of the planets.

Here is a story relating to prohibition which I cannot resist giving for the entertainment of my European readers. It needs no comment. I quote it just as I read it in a Western newspaper.

"A New York man, on a visit to Kansas, decided that he would like a drink, but they said to him:

"'You can't get a drink anywhere except at the drug store.'

"So he went to the drug store:

"'You can't get a drink here, sir, without a doctor's prescription.'

"'But I'm perishing,' said the visitor, 'perishing for a drink. I haven't time to get a doctor's prescription.'

"'Well,' said the druggist, 'I have no power to supply you with a drink except for snake-bite.'

" ' Where is the snake ? ' said the man eagerly. ' Give me the snake's address ? '

" So the druggist gave him the snake's address, and he hurried off. But in ten minutes he hurried back again.

" ' For heaven's sake,' he said, ' give me that drink. The snake is engaged for twelve weeks ahead.' "

CHAPTER VI

THE SILENT ISLE

For most abnormalities of an adverse nature, whether on land or sea, the Westerner has a convenient habit of making the Japan Current, *Kuro Siwo*, the scapegoat. If a late frost nips the apple blossom, the Japan Current is to blame. If it is extremely hot; if rain falls at the wrong season; if the salmon don't come up the rivers to be canned at their appointed time; if beer goes up in price; in a word, if "life is just one darned thing after another," it is the Japan Current, or the alleged mysterious absence of it, which is said to be at the bottom of the evils.

Thus, when we set out from San Pedro for Catalina Island, and the "Cabrillo," when less than half-way over, began to pitch and roll in what seemed to be a most unjustifiable manner for so calm an ocean, the passengers, instead of accusing the boat, as they one by one sank into passive attitudes of expectant uneasiness, or complete abandonment to misery, made lame excuses for themselves and each other at intervals, by stating that the Japan Current was more than the best sailors could stand. At any rate, once having experienced the trials of the Pacific, with *Kuro Siwo* thrown in as an extra, there must be few who would feel not less hardly of Cortez, grim over-

BANNING'S BEACH: SANTA CATALINA

lord of Mexico, for promptly cutting off the head of Bilbao because the latter gave this ocean the misleading name which it bears to this day.

Though only seven and twenty miles from the mainland, it takes the "Cabrillo," owing to her tipsy gait, nearly three hours to reach Santa Catalina, which, in that clear atmosphere, does not appear more than a third of the distance. But one has to wait until the barren cliffs of San Pedro Head and the long white line of houses at Wilmington, Long Beach, and Alamitos have sunk down into the sea, until the giants of San Bernardino have dominated the entire horizon, before the violet haze which veils the rugged hills and silvery beaches of Catalina has melted away, and the island is brought sharply into the focus of the eye.

But for the brown-skinned human amphibians, who clamour round the incoming boat and dive for silver coins in the bay, and the curious formation of the hills which embrace the Bay of Moons, the little town of Avalon must at first strike the visitor who knows the hamlets of the Norwegian fjords with a strange familiarity. Here are the wooden buildings, their painted faces looking out to sea in a variety of complexions from warm, dusky umber to yellow, pale grey, and white. Here are some flat-nosed, flat-bottomed boats, with an occasional boatman idly rowing face foremost. Here, too, there is a continuous throbbing of small motor craft, whose voices resound in the echoing cliffs as they do in the granite walls of Scandinavia. But a closer scrutiny, a peep into the sea, soon dispel such comparisons. For this

is no Northern place, but an island of everlasting summer, set in a garden of a sub-tropical ocean, whose crystal-clear waters reveal those wondrous treasures of marine life of which Catalina is so justly proud.

Historically the island has had an interesting past. Its aborigines of the Stone Age were first awakened to the fact that the world contained people other than themselves by the great Spaniard, Cabrillo. But the pages of history were written slowly in those days, and the greater part of a century passed away before Catalina became nominally owned by a general of Philip III. Then some two hundred years were gathered into the past, when a Mexican governor, who had come into possession of it, sold the island for the price of a horse and saddle. In later days further transfers took place from time to time, Mr. Lick, who lies buried beneath his great telescope upon Mt. Hamilton, being owner for a period. He disposed of it to a Mr. Shatto, who, in his turn, got rid of it as a prospective gold mine to an English company. But the mine "pinched out," and the island was finally transferred to the Banning Company, who still possesses it and all that therein is. What the ultimate result will be of running an island, such as this one, as a private concern, time only can prove. If we allow analogy to be our guide, monopolies of the sort do not always spell ultimate prosperity for themselves or for others. Though many improvements have been made, presumably by the present owners, progress in building appears to be almost at a standstill—even allowing for the insular con-

ditions, compared with that of other Californian health and pleasure resorts.

It is not suggested that the proprietors of the island have not " got a good thing on " in Catalina Island, for it would appear that they undoubtedly have and are contented therein. But I heard many complaints to the effect that, there being so many restrictions put upon the purchase of land there (which is only sold leasehold), that rents being so high and security so insecure, people preferred to invest their money and their futures elsewhere. That the port is a " closed " one, open only to the ships handled under the auspices of the Banning Company, who can thus charge what they like on freight, is another grievance which is said to militate against prosperity in the commercial sense.

Then there is the scarcity of water. The Avalon side of the island yields none that is fit for drinking, that for this purpose now being brought from San Pedro, twenty-seven miles away, and retailed by the company to the populace, at ten cents for a five-gallon bottle. The risk of fire, always great in American towns which are almost entirely made of wood, is, to some extent, minimised by hydrants in connections with reservoirs of water pumped up from the sea. But local opinion appears to be that these reservoirs, not to mention the fire-extinguishing apparatus, are inefficient, and insurance premiums are, in consequence, excessively high. The question also arises as to whether the island, being a private concern, and so many miles away from the coast, is subject to the protection of the law as administered on the

mainland. I venture no opinion on the subject, but am aware that there is a strong impression in Avalon that it is not so, that the star on the coat of the " deputy sheriff " is a mere " bit of bluff," and that the malefactor, should he wish to do so, could indulge in " any old spree " with immunity.

But be all that as it may, Avalon will ever be to me an inn of quiet memories, an island of sequestered peace. The very fact that it does not keep pace with the growth of other places is in itself one of its greatest charms.

From October to May that abiding calm is only temporarily broken by the daily arrival of the steamer from San Pedro, with its cargo of day-trippers, the mails and daily newspapers. All the town, as it likes to be called, turns out to meet the boat, whose passengers are greeted with a megaphonic reception from the " deputy sheriff." This gentleman, acting as a sort of M.C. of the crowd, bellows forth in rotation the varied attractions of the place. With an impartiality becoming his high office he lays no more emphasis upon the " magnificent scenic trip " which the " glass-bottomed power-boat " is about to make to the " Marine gardens," " Seal-rocks " or " Moonstone-beach," than he does in advertising the qualities of the humbler row-boat. He enlarges, with no less eloquence, upon the wonders which are to be seen within the aquarium (an excellent and praiseworthy institution, but to compare it with the Naples Zoological Station as the guide book so persistently does, is rather presumptuous), than he bestows upon the contents of the post-card and curio shops which line the

beach. He lifts his voice in proclamation on behalf of the good people who provide " barbecue dinners " at " two bits " per head for the bilious mariners whose bulging pockets suggest a less savoury and cheaper meal to the sagacious eye. He is there to direct the stranger, to guide intemperate feet. When his stentorian tones have announced the boat's departure, he is still there to comfort the troubled souls of those who have been left behind.

There is only one department of the visitors' requirements with which the " deputy sheriff " does not concern himself, and that is the lodging accommodation for those among the crowd who might happen to have come to stay. This he wisely leaves to those whom it concerns, the men, women, and children who, having rooms to let, pounce on the new-comer as he leaves the pier and " solicit " his patronage. These attentions are apt to be somewhat annoying to the stranger, to whom the outstretched hands, but for the advertisement cards of hotel or " rooming " houses which they press upon him, savour more of the pleadings of beggars or guides in Italy than the " solicitations " of respectable householders or their deputies. But that sort of thing your American on tour rather likes, however disturbing it may be to the more prosaic Briton.

Except for this daily incursion, which lasts for three hours only, the winter population of Avalon does not exceed three hundred. Delightful as the climate is at that season, it is in full summer when the heat, mosquitoes, and malaria drive the multitudes from the inland towns of California,

that Avalon is most populous. Then the number of inhabitants often reaches six or seven thousand, and a large majority of these are accommodated in what is called a camp, or tent city. There, in tent houses and rows of little wooden bungalows—the latter, with their wire-gauze fly-windows, looking like sublimated meat-safes—all placed so close together that there is scarcely room to squeeze between them sideways, the crowds pay high rents for the privilege of enjoying the illusion that there, beneath the eucalyptus trees, they are living " close to nature " ! This species of " camping " is not an inexpensive joy in Avalon at such a time, but the visitors have got the money to spend, and spend it they do in true American fashion.

But, of all the diversions which may be indulged in, " swimming " is the most popular. In bathing costumes of fashionable mode, both sexes and all ages—the ladies always stockinged and daintily shod—throng the sea, the shore, the streets, and the pier the day long. At " 'most any " hour there seems to be as many people about with amphibious tendencies and elementary garments as others, and, to my mind, in this respect only do the denizens of the " close to nature " camp appear to be faithful to the obligations of their cult. How, otherwise, can they who dwell in the tents of Avalon, amid the ministrations of an electric light plant, a telephonic system, gasoline cooking-stoves, tradesmen's messenger boys, a water-cart, with its burden at ten cents a bottle, and all the manifold diversions of ice-cream sodas, pop-corn and pool and " photographs-while-you-

wait," not to mention "the biggest dancing saloon on the Pacific Coast," be said to live "close to nature?"

Santa Catalina, which is twenty-seven miles long and from one to seven miles wide, we have often been told, by the scribes who hunger after impressiveness, is "a mountain-top at sea." But I take it that it shares that definition with most islands of deep oceans. Surrounding it on all sides is a great forest of kelp and other marine growth, and these wonders of the sea visitors are able to view from glass-bottomed boats. The floor of the ocean is always fascinating because it is so often hidden from our eyes. But here, in these sub-tropical waters, one may look down into gardens of the sea which are illuminated by the mystic radiance of a sunlight which infuses the translucent deeps with an emerald and opaline splendour.

Slowly drifting over these enchanting pastures of ocean, great broad leaves and mighty thongs of olive-tinted kelp brush past the windows of the sea through which we are looking. But now the curtains are swept aside, the forest opens, and we glide over a sweet valley furred with elegant mosses, jewelled by rainbow-tinted shells in a setting of lichened rocks of many colours, gay with wide-rayed anemones. Fishes of brilliant hue and exquisite design flash across the window, or stare at the faces of the onlookers with round and lustrous eye. Beautiful medusæ of diaphanous texture, their exquisite tresses of wondrous colours, waving, undulating, swaying to the breathing pulse of the sea, float by. Polyzoans,

of elegant shape and hue, are weaving mermaid's robes in their homes of lace. On pinions of crystal, tiny atlanta shells wing their way through the turquoise shades. Living sponges of orange and red and sulphur-yellow star the dark, encrusted rocks. Here is a place where the moving water gently parts the deep green carpeting of velvet mosses, and, among the pebbles and rocks of marvellous colours, the boatman points out the threatening whips of a hidden cray-fish, flaccid but brilliant star-fishes, slug-like sea cucumbers, and the spiny hedgehog of the waters. Strange fishes, which have imitated the boughs and leaves of kelp, hide among that umbrageous tree of ocean. Leering eels look at us with resentful eyes, and those tiny and elegant creatures—the corals—contract their scintillating rays as the shadow of the boat passes over their limey caverns, as the stars of heaven are obscured by a drifting cloud.

> Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
> The dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear:
> Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
> And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

But, happily, it is given to the visitor at Avalon to see the gems of ocean, not in dark, "unfathomed caves," but in waters which the sun has filtered with his pure light. In those silent depths, embowered by the mighty branches of the kelpian forests, lies a garden of hallowed peace such as the poet Gray might have seen in his illumined dreams. No footfall breaks the infinite silence of its quiet glades. The discords of air have never troubled the breathless peace which reigns within its summer bowers. Older than the gardens of

GLASS-BOTTOMED BOATS : AVALON

CACTUS AND CAÑON : SANTA CATALINA

earth, more venerable than the giant redwood tree, there is little wonder that these entrancing deeps fill us with something akin to reverence. Cloisters of ancient peace, mother-gardens of continents, they were the first to witness the dark conception of earth's unborn wonders, and will, perchance, be the last to witness the passing of Nature's supremest triumph.

To the stranger unacquainted with volcanic islands the topography of Catalina is scarcely less striking than its sea-gardens and wonderful climate. From mountain peaks which rise to over two thousand feet, V-shaped cañons, their ridges pitched like the roof of a house, extend, ever widening, ever deepening to the silver beaches of the sea. Upon the southern slopes of each, pale green cactus and grey sage, grim offspring of the desert, cling to the naked, sun-baked rocks and red-brown soil; while the other, the cooler slope, has quite a different aspect. Here dark green bushes of *Heteromeles*—the "holly" of a Southern Californian Christmas—clusters of mountain lilac, aromatic shrubs among the chaparral, *Manzanita*, with its waxen pink and white blossoms, elder and other shrubs, make the contrast between the two sides of the cañons very marked, the point of contrast at the ridge of each being clearly defined.

In late summer-time, though intense heat is unknown, this is a sun-beaten, waterless land which thirsts for rain long delayed, and where the tragedy of life often becomes as severe as it is in a Northern winter. Then thin, belated sheep, often diseased, hunted by hunger, eagerly search for any shreds of

herbage which the sun and the innumerable ground squirrels may have spared them. Maddened by flies, hunger, and thirst they stagger over the cliffs or rush into the consuming sea. In the quiet night they haunt the streets of the village, picking up any refuse, even orange peels, which they may happen to find. Or, dying, they seek the sultry depths of the cañons, often within the dim sound of water which seeps, untasted and unseen, through the sun-bleached gravel below. Frail lambs, begotten of emaciated mothers, are born only to be the carrion of crows when privation has done its worst. (I commend this case of revolting cruelty, if it still exists, to one or other of the humane societies on the Californian coast, and I am given to understand that the sheep on the other islands of Santa Barbara Channel fare no better at the hands of their owners.)

Just as there is ever a great silence where nature adds the hardships of her snow and frost to the perils of a prolonged winter, so here the cañons of summer are hushed beneath the burning day. No sound of running water lifts up its gladdening voice in their silent depths ; no wind moves the tired, drooping boughs of the fragrant eucalyptus. The whinnying of doves' wings may pierce the calm for a moment and melt into the infinite. In whispers, the distant sea may toll the passing dirge of each shattered wave and, for a moment, thrill the silent island to the heart with its ominous warning. But these things are of the earth, finite, transitory. Listen, with an ear which plumbs the depths of silence, and you will hear, as in a fossil shell, a distant murmur of that

ancient world of waters which once covered these vales of sunshine. Here is " the stillness of the central sea," the inarticulate lispings of earth's primitive cradle ; here, too, the tranquil silence which still broods over those " hanging gardens " in the sunlit glades of the kelpian forest.

In striking contrast to the starving sheep, cast by inhuman hands upon an island where, without artificial aid, many must perish under the summer sun, is the cactus. Though a menace to mankind and a source of danger to every living thing, save, perhaps, the verminous ground squirrels, this redundant pest is most perfectly adapted to its environment. When evening comes it opens its countless lips and copiously drinks the grateful dew until its spongy reservoirs of precious water, guarded by a dread array of poisoned spines, are filled for its journey under the next day's sun. While others perish, it alone flaunts its cup-like corolla of glistening gold to the thirsty noon. But if this ubiquitous plant, depending upon the moisture of the air for its nourishment, takes but little from the earth, it certainly gives nothing in return. The flattened, pear-shaped stems—called " leaves " only by courtesy—never fall to earth, never lend their aid to the formation of humus. Yet, if one of them should accidentally be knocked off, it at once sends a tiny rootlet into the dry, stony ground, nourishes it with the water of its own capacious reservoirs and, in a few days, a new cactus plant is born. Thus does Nature, by so nicely adjusting the species to its environment, preserve and perpetuate her lowliest creatures and things, while man, her greatest and last

achievement, goes stumbling on in a chaos of difficulty and doubt.

But contrast is the very salt of life, and the breaking up of the drought, the coming of the blessed rain, on or about the winter solstice, is like a welcome, long-awaited thaw which follows a prolonged frost. Never shall I forget the spontaneity with which the hill-slopes of Catalina respond to the first rainfall, the faint film of green that in a few hours creeps over the steaming, ruddy earth; nor how the cañons, yesterday so hushed, fill with bird-song, the sweet air with a fuller fragrance of aromatic shrubs; how, in a few days, the sun-parched, crumbling soil becomes a pasture of brightest green, with maiden-hair ferns covering vast tracts with their incomparable grace and fragile tenderness, while, beginning with the lilac afileria, the pageant of spring flowers will have started on its joyous way before the first thrushes in England have begun to sing.

Beyond the "tent-city" and its grove of eucalyptus there is a good, sporting golf-links in the beautiful Vale of Avalon. However sun-burned the latter may be in summer, at any other time it is one of the greenest, most lovable valleys which it has ever been my good fortune to enjoy. The short, fine grass, moulded over the lower slopes, no less than the soft velvety green of the wooded flanks of the cañon, are features rare anywhere in Southern California. But, curiously enough (and here again we have a sample of America's taste for contrariety), the "greens" of this green valley are brown—being asphalted and covered with a fine, peaty substance. What an

THE VALE OF AVALON

THE BAY OF MOONS: AVALON

old-school golfer, with a Scottish regard for the royal and ancient, would say when he saw these brown "greens" for the first time, I dare not contemplate.

Although there are some excellent stage roads on Santa Catalina, and tolerably good goat and quail shooting, the island, to the sportsman, is essentially a fishing centre. Avalon is known all over the world of sport as a rendezvous for sea-anglers, which has few equals. Volumes have been written upon the lordly tuna, gamest fish of ocean—the mighty albacore, the splendid yellow-tail and other monsters of the deep, which, upon "light tackle," have tried the skill and endurance of the worthiest of anglers.

The Tuna Club, which has its comfortable quarters over the very waters which have yielded its members so many prizes, is a flourishing institution, and has for its founder, president, and "Grand Old Man" Dr. Chas. F. Holder, who probably knows more about the sea sport of these Pacific islands than anyone else. The only regrettable fact which one has to chronicle regarding the Tuna Club, and the sea angling at Catalina, is that the tuna has for several years forsaken the waters which it has made so famous. Many explanations have been offered to account for the sudden disappearance of this great fish, but none of them have yet solved the secret which the ocean holds. But the Tuna Club, with true piscatorial patience, waits. Some day, at any hour, it feels assured, the mighty mackerel will awake and emerge from that lonely furrow which he has ploughed for so long, what time the little

flying-fish which he loves flicker like splintered shafts of sunbeams over the Bay of Moons. Then will these placid waters once again break into foam with the joy of the fighting tuna who has returned to his old hunting-grounds, and from the hill-top a wireless message bearing the good tidings will be flashed across the ocean so that every fisherman even in the uttermost parts of earth may rejoice and hasten to the feast.

But when all has been written, and I have but outlined a few of Santa Catalina's features, the island remains, more than any other thing, a haunt of silence. Some of that elemental hush that dwells within those gardens of ocean which encircle it still pervades its untroubled air. It is " an hiding place from the wind . . . the shadow of a great rock " in a world that is sometimes weary with the convulsions of civilisation. At its heart there dwells a silent, unspeakable peace, like the passive, eager joy of a flower ; the peace that is of simple and tender things.

CHAPTER VII

PART I

THE MISSION FATHERS

It will soon be a century and a half since that eventful day when, the Jesuits having been expelled by the King of Spain from his provinces which to-day border on Southern California, Junipero Serro, with sixteen other members of the Order of St. Francis of Assisi, landed at San Diego. Why the Jesuits, who had accompanied the troops of Spain throughout those early years of missionary labour, annexation, and pursuit of gold, were expelled, need not concern us here. It is enough to know that, from the landing of Serro and his brown-robed brethren, dates the beginning of Californian history. All the evidence at our command goes to prove that Serro, whose object was to teach the Indians not only the elements of Christianity, but the rudiments of husbandry and citizenship, was sincere and pious as a missionary and priest, vigorous and capable as an organiser and explorer. From San Diego, near the borders of what is now Mexican territory, he and his intrepid followers blazed the lonely trail through the untrodden wilderness for nearly five hundred miles northward to Monterey, erecting as they went those missions which to-day,

even in their ruins, are eloquent monuments to the zeal of the good padres of those pioneer days. Linking one mission to another, there still remains El Camino Real—The King's Highway—the great "Roman Road" of California, furrowing the plain, the mountain, and the valley with the footsteps of those who, inspired by the cross of Christ and the standard of Spain, sowed the seeds of the new civilisation of the Far West.

For nearly half a century the Franciscans laboured, instructing Indians who, being of a low, child-like type, had first to be reduced to something approaching a mild form of slavery, in the elements of agriculture, the weaving of clothes, in all that a self-supporting civilisation must have for its well-being. Villages for their accommodation, sprang up about the missions, the primeval forest was cleared and cultivated lands began to extend far and wide on every side. Great herds of cattle grazed on miles of country which had hitherto been the home only of deer and other wild animals, and those lands, over which the chimes of the mission bells rang to summon the native workers from the field to prayer, to meals or to rest, were the best watered and most fertile in the State.

But with the progress of time, with the coming of early settlers, of adventurers, of merchants who bought the overplus of the mission products, and the continued extension of the Franciscan's property, came the irrevocable fate which has awaited most institutions of the kind. The Mexican (Spanish) Government began to urge the secularisation of the missions, and to legislate

with the object of securing from the padres proper titles for the lands they claimed. For thirteen years the matter was discussed with determination and vigour on the one side, and stubborn resistance on the other. But the padres, save those of Santa Barbara, who never wholly surrendered, were ultimately forced to give way. With that came the collapse of the whole missionary system in California. The missions were plundered. What was left of them sank in ruins. The Indians, deprived of their native instincts and hardihood, went back to the wilderness, to disease and starvation, and the padres and their neophytes were scattered to the four winds.

When the American flag was planted at Monterey in 1847, the decree, issued by General Kearney, that all mission property should remain with the priests, until such time as proper titles could be assigned to them, came too late. The mischief was done, and the work of sixty years of patient toil was crumbling into dust. Then came the mad gold rush of '49, which converted the country into a pandemonium of reckless, unscrupulous adventurers, delirious with the lust for wealth. And what vestige of hope was there left for the pious fathers who, no matter what opinions may be held regarding their policy of dealing with the Indians (always a difficult question), were never inspired by personal ambition or prospect of pecuniary gain? Clean in motive, sincere in faith, honourable in labour, the memory of those good padres is a heritage which California would do well to honour and respect.

Now it is the ruins of these old missions which

are the trump cards in the hands of the people who cater for the Californian tourist. They are the chief lions in the list of "attractions," the sheet anchor of the post-card maker, the last ditch of every aspiring poet and painter who hunt the West for romance and art, the unfathomable well (would that it would dry up!) from which the "My Country—'tis-of-thee" type of American draws those evanescent babbles of literature which inflate the pages of every drivelling pamphlet and fatuous magazine on the Pacific Slope.

But these old ruins, memorials of unselfish labour, of a faith that was brave and sincere, are, perhaps, greater sufferers after all at the hands of the popularising crowd, the hypocritical admiration of the sentimental vulgar and the rapturous party of the "scenic" and "haphazardry" order, than they have ever been at the hands of neglect. Their old-world, Roman-Spanish architecture, with its flagged court, long colonnades of Roman arches and curious corrugated tiles, has been plagiarised, plundered, and distorted in every conceivable form. The houses of oil kings and borax princes, the wooden façades of livery stables, the stuccoed fronts of motor garages, the piazzas where bands play, the public baths, the hospitals, the libraries, the railway stations, often the very stores, one sees in the mission "style." As if that were not enough, the tourist is confronted, wherever he goes, by mission ice-cream, mission pickles, mission boots, mission soap, mission this, mission that and the other, until he gets so heartily sick of the very word that it is sometimes a relief to flee the district, only he is

sure to be faced by some other adoption of the vulgar, whichever way he may turn. Yosemite suffers in the same way, so does Mt. Shasta and the Big Trees ; nothing is too sacred to be bandied about by people whose sense of proportion is limited and whose sense of art is nil.

Of Carmel Mission, Stevenson wrote in 1880: " The church is roofless and ruinous, sea-breezes and sea-fogs, and the alternation of the rain and sunshine, are daily widening the breaches and casting the crockets from the wall. . . . There is no sign of American interference, save where a headboard has been torn from a grave to be a mark for pistol bullets." Since that time, however, there has been an effort made to restore these old churches, but it is a doubtful question whether it would not have been better to hold together the remaining fragments rather than endeavour to restore the whole. Restoration schemes in the hands of iconoclastic " restorers " are seldom satisfactory in any country, and the Californian seems to have been rather less happy in his methods and results than is usually the case. Why, for example, that modern roof on the Carmel church, which is quite out of all sympathy with the old façade and tower which remained standing ? Why that hideous iron standard surmounted by a bell, swinging in a belfry of corrugated zinc, at San Miguel ? An atrocious disfigurement to an already melancholy ruin. And that dreadful expenditure of stucco and paint which embalms the relics of San Luis Obispo ? But let us not extend the sorry list.

To the tourists, as I have said, the missions of

California are a "draw," and so long as their ancient peace is not destroyed, so long as they are awarded that respect which is, or should be, the reward of antiquity, there is no reason why they, or some of them yet unspoiled, should not still be a place of refuge and delight from the hustle and stress of modern life. But it is difficult to hope for much when such an authority as Prof. Blackman writes thus, in his *Spanish Institutions of the South-West*: "Some missions have crumbled to dust, and all will soon be forgotten in the new civilisation of the Anglo-Saxon; the civilisation of steam and electricity, of free institutions, and universal intelligence, the civilisation wrought by wheat, fruit, and gold." The learned and, I presume, patriotic professor may speak for Americans, but he need not call his countrymen "Anglo-Saxons," for they are to-day nothing of the sort, whatever they might have been on the *Mayflower*. Such a civilisation of "universal intelligence" which he refers to would convert the Coliseum into a dynamo, the Pantheon into a Carnegie library. Let us try to hope all Americans do not share his extraordinary views.

California is not only rich in features of some antiquity, which, even in their present condition, afford a contrast with the "new civilisation," which is sublime, but there are parts of it which have a natural grandeur which would be difficult to equal anywhere. To my mind, however, and I am not alone in my opinion, the peculiarly rapturous style of popularising this "sight" or that at once destroys the intrinsic charm of any place. I am not one of those who rave and write

THE COLONNADE

By permission of the Rev. Father Abbot

OLD MISSION : SANTA BARBARA

letters to the newspapers when a railway to the top of a mountain is projected, for such things are useful and rarely affect the beauty of nature to any appreciable extent. But I do object, and most heartily, to that desecration to which the noble redwoods, for example, are often subjected. To label these venerable trees with the names of popular political heroes ; to ticket their majestic columns with the visiting card of every fool—and there must be many of these, to judge by the result—who " visits " them ; to cut them down so that a dancing floor may be made on the polished surface of the stump ; to mutilate the growing monarch so that a stage coach may drive through its very heart, all these things and others are worse, a thousand times worse, than turning these trees into lumber and shingles. It is vandalism gone mad. It is enough to send the grey hairs of John Muir with sorrow to the grave.

Your American sight-seer is never satisfied with things as they stand. He must paint the lily and throw a perfume on the violet, which we know is " ridiculous excess." In many places which I went to see, whenever the rock scenery was inspiring and tinted with those wonderful colour effects common to volcanic eruptions of late origin, there was always some ubiquitous creature at my elbow offering me, at fifteen cents apiece, bits of tinted glass through which I was invited to gaze and exclaim, " Gee ! but that's dandy ! " That sort of thing, no matter how impotent it may be to alter the fundamental beauties of nature, is nothing short of a personal affront, which one can only pardon on the supposition that the supply

of those bits of glass is the fruit of a demand on the part of a people who are grossly ignorant, or who are affected by scenery only when it is melodramatic and flagrant. Yosemite with lime-light effects ! It paralyses conception. Vulgarisation, vandalism, and the spectacular are, in these days, thrust upon the traveller in many countries, but I have never seen these things in grosser, more revolting form than on the Pacific Slope. *Vox populi* is not *vox Dei* over there, at any rate !

But far be it from me to suggest that the West has no features of natural beauty and grandeur, that have not yet been desecrated by the cat-calls and finger-prints of the philistine. The Sierra Nevada and the more accessible coast ranges still hold, in the depths of many a green valley, those unbroken charms which belong to earth. There is many a hill-top whose sublimity has rarely been disturbed by the footsteps of man. Cool streams there are in many a deep green cañon, which the angler has never seen ; great mossy rocks, with their clustered fern, which never know the heat of summer, even when the far-away valleys are burning beneath a pitiless sky. To the northward, yonder, are mighty glaciers—stalwart survivors of an unremembered age—still clinging, with stern tenacity, to their last stronghold amid the tents of winter. Eternal is the great roar of the Pacific breakers, eternal the sullen drift of the mist, which rises like grey smoke from the conflicting elements which make war upon one another along a thousand miles of sea and cliff. But the mountains are always terrible ; the sea is more terrible than the moun-

tains ; it defies the hand of violation and scorns the vulgarity of a passing age.

Wandering across the outspread map, my eye rests upon a place so lovely, so full of a rare and exquisite beauty, that the memory of it refreshes once more the gladness and the sadness which it gave me. To-day the flowers will be asleep, the extravagant azaleas and the tall lilies with their pale, cold petals hanging over the water. The leaves of the trees will have died and, falling, covered up my footsteps. But I like to think that in the quiet night, in those never-to-be-forgotten Californian nights, with their skies of such infinite depths, their stars of such matchless lustre, the dim shadows of that tender darkness are yet wrapped in their primeval quietude, that the sombre pines still whisper the nocturnes of that unbroken hush, and that the joy of the dawning will for ever ring with the lyrics which the morning stars have sung together from the beginning.

PART II

CLIMATE

Perhaps climate is of even more importance to most travellers than what, for want of a less odious word, I must call scenery. But, to refer to the climate of California in a sentence (and people, of whom I was once one, who do not know any better, have a way of saying, " Yes, of course, the climate of California is generally considered to be the finest in the world ") is just about as absurd

as it would be to try and dispose of that of Europe between two commas. How can it be otherwise when we consider the fact that the State covers an area of 188,980 square miles ; when we know that it is in the form of an elongated strip of land running from north to south, with physical features of infinite diversity ; when we remember that within its boundaries are regions of eternal snow and deserts of almost tropical heat ; when we realise that the highest altitude (Mt. Whitney, 14,502 ft.) in the United States (excluding Alaska), as well as the lowest (Death Valley, 275 ft. below sea-level), are also within its borders—and both within a few miles of each other. It would not be a difficult matter, therefore, to point to a hundred different places in California, all varying one from another in climate as widely as does Avalon (which is about as near perfection as can be in that respect) from one of those plains of torment which only a Dante could picture.

But in referring to this matter I am not going to weary either the reader or myself with tabulated columns of mean temperatures and humidities. These signify but little to most people, and are often very misleading. Take one example, San Francisco. The mean (this adjective is used in the meteorological and not in the Californian sense, when it is the equivalent of evil, nasty, untrustworthy !) annual temperature here is, according to Baedeker, 55° Fahr., while that of Avalon would be but a very few degrees higher. Yet the respective climates of the two places differ as night does from day. San Francisco is either blanketed beneath a depressing

sea mist, or swept by bitterly cold, dust-laden winds. One or the other is always present for the greater part of the year, and the bald reading of the thermometer does not tell one these things.

Avalon, on the other hand, as I have stated in an earlier chapter, knows neither of these evils. Hence the fallacy of relying upon the thermometer alone—an instrument that can seldom be considered a reliable guide without an accompanying barometer—when a question of climate is being decided. The futility of comparing the mere temperature of one place with another, San Francisco and Avalon, or Avalon and Nice, is only too obvious. Of course, this is done *ad nauseam* by the pamphleteers of the West—and by some writers who ought to know better, but it goes down with the Mid-West tourist and a good many other people who, sooner or later, learn to put their own experiences before the misdirected use of the thermometer. The latter is, under the circumstances, about as reliable a guide to the weather as the Scottish parson's rain-gauge was in registering the rainfall of his parish. The reader will remember that the old gentleman brought the instrument indoors every night lest someone should steal it !

For a long time the enthusiasts of Southern California have made it their own particular boast that the winter tourist who visits, let us say, Long Beach, can bathe in the sea before breakfast; stroll amid roses, orange orchards, and subtropical gardens during the morning; lunch, toboggan and play at snow-balling at noon, and

be home again to the seaside for dinner. So great was the ignorance prevailing on these topics in certain quarters, that the possibility of doing such a round of diversions in one day was doubted by many people of the Mid-West. More than that, the "proposition" was openly scoffed at and put down as "another sample of California's brag." But the Native Sons were not to be sat upon. They invited a car-load of representatives, from Chicago, if memory serves me faithfully, to come over and prove the possibility of the "proposition" for themselves—at California's expense. The deputation came, were duly photographed in the sea, among the orange groves, playing at snow-balling on Mt. Lowe, and again at dinner the same evening, and I presume the members were all duly convinced—and impressed!

Now, my object in referring to this rather stupid affair is twofold. First, the Californians (though I do not say they were wrong in proving their statements) should not boast so extravagantly of the possibility of the feat, because it can be achieved in a number of other places in Europe and elsewhere—and is achieved every day. Secondly, if it was narrow of them to brag of a feature as though it were their own special and unique property, it was still more narrow, it displayed a more profound ignorance of the Chicago people to disbelieve a statement which contained nothing extraordinary, until dished-up and garnished with the sauce of sensationalism by the Californians. The world only smiles indulgently at such hysterical proceedings, yet the memory of that day, and all that it proved

and did not prove, is still repeated by intelligent, educated men in the West who, I take it, will hand it down to their children's children as marking an epoch in the history of the Golden State. The anniversary of the Declaration of Independence is scarcely held more dear by the people of California than is the memory of how a car-load of rather stupid "Mid-Westers" came nearly three thousand miles to satisfy themselves that it was possible to "swim," pick oranges, and snowball each other *all on the same day!* Yet nobody sees anything funny in it!

But if, in considering the climate of California from the point of view only of the tourist or invalid, who seeks a pleasant country in which he may escape the rigours of winter or the extremes of summer heat, one's attention will be mainly concentrated upon the coast towns from Monterey to San Diego. True there are resorts among the mountains in which people take refuge when the heat in the summer valleys is unbearable, places such as Tahoe, Shasta Springs, and scores of others which have mineral springs, camping and fishing facilities or other features to recommend them. But winter, after all, is California's great season. There are probably few places on the American continent, or in Europe, that can equal, in climatical conditions, the coast towns I have referred to. They all, owing to local conditions, have their own peculiar individual character, and if all, save Avalon (Catalina Island), Santa Barbara, and a few others, have rather more wind than the average European visitor appreciates, he is to some extent compensated by an

unusual evenness of temperature and a relatively low humidity.

I would not go so far as to promise the visitor to the coast towns which lie between San Diego and El Pizmo very much that is of even ordinary interest, in the way of natural beauty. For, with few exceptions, the coast-line is low, naked, and wind-swept, and the hills many miles from the sea. Nor would I dare suggest that he is likely to get one-third of that amusement, entertainment and society to which he has been accustomed at any little Mediterranean seaside resort. Life, as a rule, goes to a sombre tune, and I can recall occasions when a gramophone, or an automatic piano, has been a cheering break in the monotony. He will not get his afternoon tea-room, or his café, save an ice-cream and ginger-pop counter dignified by that name. The hand of prohibition lies heavily like a wet blanket on most of these places. There is a distressing want of something to do. But he will get sunshine—such sunshine as he will ever remember—and rarely a wet day. But I must say no more in this strain, or that generous race of men who call themselves reviewers, will say I have written a guide-book. There is one piece of advice, however, that I will risk parting with for the benefit of fellow-travellers, and it is this: Before going to California to winter, study thy Baedeker, and thou wilt rarely go astray. But, if you would be wise, hearken not unto the voice of the local patriot, who so often hath an honeyed tongue and a heart that is like the nether millstone.

IN MISSION CAÑON: SANTA BARBARA

CHAPTER VIII

SANTA BARBARA : HER FLOWERS AND FOOTHILLS

I ARRIVED at Santa Barbara one evening in spring. The Pacific, as the train swept round the corner at Ventura, came suddenly into sight, flooded with the rare beauty of the fleeting twilight of the West. Across the horizon the Channel Islands lay like great violet-hued dolphins, stranded in a sea of subdued crimson. The higher sky, of yellowy green, was swept by trailing wisps and fretted streamers of fiery red, which lit the foam of the waves, the seagulls' wings, the sand dunes and chaparral of the rugged hills with a strange and unearthly light. But, like most really beautiful things, the wonderful sunsets of the Orient are quick to perish. A few moments only and the burning sky pales to softest lavender, the lavender to leaden grey. The sea, which was aflame with mystic fires, whose waves were dancing feet, whose birds were airy, phantom things of imagination, whose delights were the strong, eager delights of youth, is cold again and terrible in its uncommunicative desolation. A thing to freeze the soul of laughter, a vast wilderness of grey waters, in which grey, melancholy herons stalk with ghostly strides and chill despondency for company.

My first encounter with the natives of Santa

Barbara was a curious and, of its kind, I am happy to add, a solitary one. Seeing an inviting array of "English walnuts" in the window of a little store, I went in to buy some. The adjective may possibly have arrested my sympathies, though (and readers who are vegetable feeders may be glad to learn this) I was not unaware of the fact that the nuts which stained my fingers as a boy came to greater perfection in California than in English orchards. However, the old lady who served me with a generous pound was not slow to discern my nationality. Asking me how long I had been in California, I replied, "six months."

And looking at me with a good firm stare, in which I thought there were some symptoms of incredulity, she remarked: "My! but you have sure-ly learned to speak the language pretty good in so short a time."

Withered and speechless, I fled. And, having collected my shattered thoughts, almost wished I had left a few h's with her, as well as my twenty cents. Then, perhaps, I might have been spared the blow. Or why did I not forget to say "please" or "thank you"? Even that omission might have saved me. Notwithstanding, I, guided doubtless by that Christian virtue which tells one to love one's enemies, often went back to the little shop, and the old girl, the walnuts, and myself became fast friends.

Facing south, as it does, Santa Barbara, with its sheltering mountains, its bay embraced by the long arms of rocky promontories, and its string of islands to break the incoming storms of the Pacific, possesses a climate which would be hard to excel anywhere. It is mild and sunny in winter

and, while the city escapes the wind which rages so continuously in many of these seaside towns and some of the inland places too, during summer, a cool sea-mist screens it from the burning sun. Indeed, the temperature is so equalised by these physical and meteorological features that it is often cooler in June than it is in January. What visitor does not remember those pleasant streets, which seem to have hit that happy medium which lies between the dismal incompetency of poor shops and that other extreme, the distracting hustle of department stores, dazzling hotels, ruinous taxi-cabs, and the rest ? Or, shall we say that Santa Barbara is a half-way house between the strait-jacketed respectability of prim Pasadena and San Francisco, as seen by a Primitive Methodist hastening home in the dark ? Where is the visitor who can forget the exhilaration and accessibility of those mountain drives, with happy children cantering in the peculiar lope of the country on their long-necked steeds ; the restful parks ; the sweet pastures along the cliffs ; the number and variety of wild birds, often so absent in California ; the quiet dignity of the old mission ? which latter is neither a crumbling ruin, nor yet a patched-up relic uncomfortably modernised, but an old church which is still cherished and loved by the Franciscan brethren who dwell beneath its venerable roof. Just as the pines and eucalyptus trees of that rugged bluff to the west of the promenade infuse the sea-airs with the fragrance of their sun-warmed boughs, so, across the wide pueblo lands upon which Santa Barbara lies, does the quietude of an earlier

age, an older country, linger like the peace of some old English cathedral town. For these features of Santa Barbara shall I ever have a fresh and abiding memory.

In few places can one see adobe buildings so unspoiled by modern setting as here. Seldom does the Chinaman, in green smock and round, black skull-cap, seem more at ease, as he sits smoking the peace-pipe at his door, than in Santa Barbara. Here he does not wear his pig-tail underneath his hat, as though he were ashamed of it; here he has not forgotten the "smile that is childlike and bland," and, to my mind, John, the unoppressed, lends a touch of ancient dignity to a race that, in its oft-times insufferable vanity, would scorn the Oriental with a more bitter, more unjustifiable scorn than that with which the Christian has, in the past, oppressed the Jew.

If we except the amazing squads of scarlet geraniums, out of the midst of which the Potter Hotel emerges, and the row of tall, thin fan-palms, with their feet embedded in the cement of the promenade, which stand like so many umbrellas blown inside out, there is little in Santa Barbara to satisfy lovers of the spectacular. Indeed, the city would seem to lean the other way. She inclines her heart rather to the chattering of happy waxwings among the coral fruit of her pepper-trees, to the wind that bends the silver plumes of her pampas fields, with a soft and gentle whisper, to the wild flowers of pasture and mountain, to that sublime peace which haunts the cloistered shades of the mission church, yea, even to the croaking of the innumerable frogs, which

drown the voices of her little birds in the deep green tule beds of evening, rather than to the " scenic " allurements of a more sensational kind. Doubtless the real-estate-monger could draw up an exhaustive list of scare-headed wonders to stimulate his trade even here, but methinks he does not prosper at Santa Barbara.

To most tourists travelling in Southern California, the difficulties of getting away from the beaten track are usually so great that they have to satisfy their imaginations with hearsay reports of the cool, green glens, trout streams, and other delights which lie hidden in the folds of the distant mountains. They have not got the time, nor, perhaps, the inclination, to indulge in a long trail on horseback. Stage journeys are expensive and usually very uncomfortable, owing to the bad roads and dust. Or the visitor may have a time-table for his inexorable master. And, while there is undoubtedly much solid foundation for these objections, while it may be admitted at once that the best of California, from the point of view of natural beauty, lies far beyond the reach of the average visitor, there are one or two places which are quite accessible and for which I have a memory that time does not dim.

One of these is Mission Cañon, Santa Barbara. That there are finer, more majestic, cañons than this one to be found, in any number, among the mountains of California, I am well aware. But if there is any one among the lesser mountain glens which combines the charm of intrinsic loveliness, with proximity to the railroad, as this one does, I would like to hear of it.

Nobody ever thinks of walking anywhere in America, when he can compass the earth in a street-car for a nickel. Thus we pay our fare and, in about ten minutes from the railway depôt, the roar of the car sinks down into a subdued drone and is silent. For, monster as it is, no sooner has the mission church come into view, than it seems to grow suddenly aware that the hallowed calm which still abides there must not be violated by rude intrusion. We pass a dripping, slimy fountain of quaint design, with its worn steps and drowsy fishes (suggestive of Friday's fare) entering a lane beneath the shadow of the domed belfry tower, whose plain iron cross looks thin and old against the clear blue. After rounding a shady bend we come upon an old stone bridge, spanning, with a single leap, the rushing mountain water of a brook. It is just such a bridge as I have seen in a hundred places in Scotland or Wales. Here, too, are familiar alder trees, breaking into leaf; hazels with their spent catkins, turning brown; tender leaves of sycamore thrusting aside their pale green sheathes and reaching out their baby fingers to feel the gentle sunshine of spring.

Turning to the right (but I am getting precious near the guide-book again) immediately I have crossed the bridge, a gate, which is wide open, invites me to enter a place which has both the appearance of a private garden and a public way. The exotic flowers and trees and a pretty bungalow, almost hidden by creepers, and a board by the entrance, bearing the words, "To the home of . . ." might suggest that it was private ground. On the other hand, those little wooden pegs,

more or less hidden among the grass, which ask the passer-by not to pick the flowers, are seldom seen anywhere but in a public place. However, many a time have I turned in at that open gate and marvelled that so often did I find myself quite alone. No one ever seemed to go that way. The only signs of human life I ever saw about the bungalow were two golden-haired children playing with a toy on the sunlit gravel path between the ranks of flowers, and a canary in a cage that swung in a pergola of roses at the door. Certainly nobody ever came to " pick the flowers," and the little wooden pegs are like the leaning headstones which mark the graves of the forgotten dead. The long grass is covering them ; grey lichens are fast hiding the legends which they bear. But, if the gardener who put them there has gone away, the flowers which once they protected are still there, bravely holding their own among the natives of the wild wood who have invaded their retreat.

Just as California has become the meeting-place of all nations of humanity, so here, in Mission Cañon, one may find representatives of trees and flowers from almost every quarter of the globe. The traveller, no matter to what nationality he belongs, may meet, in this enchanting spot, familiar faces among the grass, old associations among the trees, which arrest his sympathies and give him thoughts of home. Here under the live oaks, where great mossy boulders lie among bramble and raspberry, tiny yellow violets make bright with colour the dead, brown leaves. Californian poppies, which bear the name of that brave old pioneer botanist, Eschscholtz, every-

where lift their golden chalices in offering to the sun they love; dainty little blue nemophila crawls among the tall grass; brave squadrons of lupins, violet, blue, and crimson, sweep down the green aisles between the trees; red and yellow columbines shyly creep along the cool shade by the waterside where pale lilies, cold and white as convent sisters, hide from the full light of day, from the bold stare of golden daisies and the sunflower's brazen eye.

But, beautiful as all these and a hundred more are in the land of their nativity, the aliens, adopted daughters of California's sun, are perhaps even more attractive to the stranger. There are acacias and eucalyptus trees from far Australia, the one drooping with the weight of its golden tresses of bloom, the other languid, fragrant, and loved by the humming-birds. There are gigantic agaves and cactus, recalling grim memories of the desert kingdoms of the sun; dark conifers, burdened with sombre dreams of the silent dominions of the snows; nasturtiums from South America, swarming with a riotous gaiety over thickets of briar and rank weed, while their relations the common geraniums of our gardens and conservatories, settlers from the Cape of Good Hope, have found a no less congenial home in this favoured place. That most cosmopolitan of all vegetable things, the brake fern, here, as everywhere, throngs, with interlacing fronds, the shady glades; English foxgloves raise their purple spires from many a snug retreat; English ivy covers, with glistening green, the fallen tree. Frail daffodils suggest the cold, thin air of a northern spring; shrubs of

AGAVE AND CACTUS

A CORNER IN THE PARK: SANTA BARBARA

orange, fragrant with both fruit and blossom, and grey-green almond trees, are clustered among almost leafless oaks. Bananas and date-palms from the torrid south; birches and willows from the fringe of the frozen North; giant, leafy begonias from equatorial swamps; tritomas, flaming from long association with Africa's sun; callas, no longer confined to the flower-pot and the cottage window, surprise the wanderer in lonely places with the glistening whiteness of their immaculate spathes; sumptuous peonies, their hanging heads lulled in Oriental dreams; all these and others someone has gathered together in this favoured spot. Someone who, rather than violating the natural beauties of the place, has given it a wider and more sympathetic charm, by adorning its wild, untutored loveliness with the garnered treasures of a wider earth; by hedging it in with his affection that it may be the delight of generations of men.

There was only one thing in this wild garden that I could have done without, and it was the following, graven in brass and nailed upon the face of a hoary rock so that all who passed that way might read:

"I dwell apart among the hills, and
Many come and see.
And many curiously ask what
Pleasure this may be.
I smile but answer not, for they
Are blind who only see
The sycamores, wild flowers
And the river running free.
Do sky and earth unfold the
World? For them—but
Not for me."

Such lofty self-satisfaction would be delightfully apropos in some temple of the Pharisees. And if the amateur sybarite (I will not call him poet) had inscribed his tablet of brass with a humility more becoming to one whose companions were the lilies of the field, one might almost have pardoned that celestial "smile." But in this place we don't want such phylacteries, and the last time I went by that way someone appears to have thought so, for the tablet had been wrenched from its sockets!

How different the spirit and the bearing of the wrinkled, brown old man, in sandals and trailing cassock, following the plough in the little field among the trees yonder, who will tell you, in broken accents of Spain, of the land which it is deemed a privilege to till. Who will, if you ask him and are patient, tell you also of the things he loves with a poet's soul, the common things of earth and sky.

It was one of these old gentlemen, whom I met one day near Mission Cañon at the tail of a fine herd of shorthorn cows, who advised me to follow the cañon by trail into the mountains, to see the *Ceanothus* ("Californian Lilac") in bloom. I did so, but before the reader can imagine the scene which this flowering shrub presents, he must picture in his mind's eye a range of mountains, or several ranges, chiselled with many a deep gulch and rising into peaks and knolls, curiously smooth and rounded. He must clothe them with a firm, compact growth of myrtle green, whose level contour is so unbroken by any outstanding tree or projecting rock, that the whole mountain

appears more like a gigantic, well-trimmed, but irregular evergreen hedge of no design. Thus does the *Ceanothus* clothe the hills of Santa Barbara and other places, with a uniform cloak of dull green. But in early spring, when the pendant clusters of this shrub break into bloom, the mountains, from summit to valley, are almost spontaneously flooded with a blue of exquisite tint. It is a blue so cold, so vivid in tone, that it dulls the blue of heaven and is more nearly allied to the electric tint of the leadwort (plumbago) than any other. Perhaps there may be a trace of mauve in the individual clusters which, close by, resound with the hum of innumerable bees and the droning buzz of ecstatic humming-birds, but distance only clarifies the azure of this redundant shrub.

Even more beautiful, by reason of contrast, is it when the white variety flecks the slopes with a cirrus of snowy whiteness, a fleeting scud of foam amid the infinite blue. Looking on the scene, I have often wondered what Keats would have made of it—he who wrote of blue in a sonnet which deserves a wider appreciation :

> ". . . 'Tis the life of heaven—the domain
> Of Cynthia—the wide palace of the sun—
> The tent of Hesperus, and all his train—
> The bosomer of clouds, gold, grey and dun.
> Blue! 'Tis the life of waters . . .
> Blue! Gentle cousin of the forest green,
> Married to green in all the sweetest flowers."

I would like to relate, too, how, when once crossing a lonely mountain trail near Santa Barbara, under a full moon, I saw miles of the white *Ceanothus* sheeting the silent hills with a pure and wonderful light ; how the kindly old

lady of the deep night skies of California, illumined with her radiance, so inexpressibly tender, the death-like slumber of the summer night, and how myriads of little white moths fluttered, silent and white as flakes of snow, through an air that was sultry with the drowsy fragrance of countless flowers.

But your interest, dearly beloved brethren, in moths and moonbeams, in fragrances and flowers, is doubtless as limited as is my space. Yet, ere I leave Santa Barbara, I must not omit to relate the following information, of especial interest to sportsmen.

There is an hotel here which contains an imposing museum filled, among other things, with trophies of the chase, such as the skins of bear, puma, wolf, and bison, stuffed birds in great variety, and " heads " of various kinds of deer, wild sheep, elk, and other animals. At first I thought that these things were displayed so as to impress the visitor with the wonderful sporting possibilities of California, but such visions were immediately dispelled when I saw that the bison's head was ticketed $1000, that a grizzly's skin could be bought for $200, that, indeed, every pelt and feather was for sale. And I was told that many valiant sportsmen who come thither are extensive purchasers. Yea, even Englishmen (O, my country!), returning from the devastated wilds empty-handed, have been known to invest in some little trophy provided by the thoughtful proprietors of this select store. There was one tiger-skin which aroused my curiosity, for my knowledge of natural history was profound

enough to assure me that no Bengal monarch ever lived in the backwoods of America. I was, nevertheless, assured that sportsmen returning to Europe—via India—sometimes had a fancy for a tiger-skin. Thus, with a foresight as commendable as their sagacity, have these Californians provided for such a remote possibility. This particular skin, I was further informed, was that of a " genu-wine man-eater."

" How are you going to prove that ? " I asked.

" A genu-wine man-eater always has the mange on it : look at here," was the response of the attendant, drawing my attention to the moth-eaten condition of the fur. " They tell me it's the missionaries as does it," he continued, with a grin, " and I reckon their skins are a bit thick to digest easy anyways ! "

Now, I had often heard the adjectives " thick-skinned " and " hard-shelled " applied to Baptists and other saviours of the heathen, but had never before connected mange with missionary labour. But we will let that pass, as it is outside my province, and take the road which leads northwards to Monterey.

CHAPTER IX

TO SANTA MARIA IN A RIG

THE summer was still in her youth when I set out for the North in a "rig." The latter is a name applied in California to a four-wheeled conveyance which, in general appearance, looks like an English game-cart, only that it generally suffers from a lack of paint and the spokes invariably grumble a querulous song to every irregularity on the road. Nevertheless, I was more inclined to overlook the flaws in my chariot than to dwell upon them with a vexatious eye, for hopes run high on such occasions, and my worthy steed—a fetlocked mare straight from grass and weighing, I was assured, close on two thousand pounds and costing exactly $40—promised to fulfil all my demands. She was a good walker, among other accomplishments, and "campers 'most always walk in California." Observing that she was more than usually abundant in the barrel, I felt that in fording the rivers she would at least keep afloat without much difficulty.

The "Song of the Open Road," of course, came to me, as I set forth, as naturally as comes the "Lost Chord" to the dim singer in the rainy London Street. Stevenson assured my optimistic soul, that to travel hopefully was a better thing than to arrive, or words to that effect. But,

with the "lines" in my hand and the rattle of the spokes over the roads, rough with the sun-baked ruts of the winter's mud; with the hooting of trains fading into silence in my wake; the fresh air of sea and country faintly awakened by the metallic piping of the meadow lark and strange whisperings of flame-winged blackbirds, I found myself forgetting those inspiring authors already quoted, and repeating with a stolid English fervour:

> Let the steam-pot hiss till its hot,
> Give me the speed of the Tantivy trot!

It is a pleasant country, in early summer, along the coast for fifteen miles or so beyond Santa Barbara, northward. The road winds across green, undulating meadows, often within a few yards of the sea, while, farther back, the Santa Ynez mountains converge towards the coast, dipping into the ocean at Pt. Conception. On either side the banks are deep with green oats and softly waving barley, which have escaped from the neighbouring fields, or risen from the grains spilled by the nose-bags of travellers' horses. There is an abundance of wild flowers; lupins covering acres with a mosaic of blue and white; esch-scholtzias emblazoning the dry places with their incomparable yellow; innumerable little white poppies making, with sweet clovers, yarrow and other familiar blossoms, a fringe of cheerful colour along the edge of the road; blue-eyed grass, taking that place which in England would be occupied by wild hyacinths, flooding wide, sunlit slopes with pale violet. Indeed, anyone who knows the downs of Eastbourne, and many

another place in Southern England, would feel very much at home along the cliffs of Santa Barbara County. For, quite apart from the general contour of the country, there is often that chalky whiteness in the soil, there are those friendly little gulches, or "gaps," into which the cliff road dips at intervals, there are the sea-gulls and cormorants, swallows and martins, and many another familiar object to remind him of the homeland.

But America, faithful to her traditional inclination for contrast, cannot offer the traveller the same thing in matters of scenery and climate for more than a day or so, or even a few miles, at a stretch. The change from the soft sunlit airs, from the dreamy, listless swish of the ocean with its broad, waving leaves of kelp, the smiling flowers and cheerful birds of these cliffs, as I turned into Gaviota Pass, was abrupt and discomforting. For here one is met by a bitterly cold wind that never ceases blowing year in and year out. Hungry and bare are the grey hills, leaden the waters of the stream, torn and beaten the few leaning trees. There is a smell of coal oil in the air, and the few habitations which one meets are, by their very ugliness, obviously connected with that unlovely product of earth. Even at Los Crucis, which is a tiny hamlet of two or three shacks (and a total population of five !) well up the Pass, the climate was not much more genial, and sleeping in the open there was like sleeping in a pneumatic tube. But Los Crucis possesses a store, the only one, I believe, on more than thirty miles of road, so, in spite of the wind

A WAYSIDE HALT NEAR GOLETA

and the general discomfort which it always brings to life in the open, I owe Los Crucis and its unclean, musty little store the gratitude engendered by a full meal.

Not only is it exceedingly difficult to procure the most ordinary necessities of life along many of these roads, but what I found more wanting than any other feature was the roadside hostelry, such as we know in Europe, in a word, the humble but hospitable pub. I am not fastidious nor, I hope, unreasoning enough to expect to find, in so new a country as this, "The Jolly Carter" greeting my arrival with the shade of venerable elms, with the generous savour of roast beef and landlord's welcome and smile. Indeed, I could, on the afternoon of many a hard day's travel, have greeted the dreariest saloon that ever heard the chuckle of the dice. But, to take a single instance, there was not a resting-place which invited me to stay between Santa Barbara and Santa Maria, a full sixty miles of hard going. I think I can recall one of those forbidding places, done in somebody's latest sanit-airy paint of vivid tint, where the proprietor, I will not call him host or landlord, looks like a nonconformist preacher weaned on sour milk, and where there is an atmosphere not of cakes and ale and good cheer, but of stucco and texts and the wet blanket of a grandmotherly legislation. By some ill-fortune I once entered one of those temples of purity in the darkness, and asked for wine—a local product, by the way. But my request was met by a stare that blighted my soul like an east wind, and, after having travelled twenty-six miles

under a burning sun and upon the dustiest of roads, was given a glass of tepid water instead. No doubt I could have secured anything I happened to want "round the corner," but the passer-by, for whose benefit hotels were primarily established, does not always come into contact with the "blind-pigs," and I was going on.

The wayside saloon in California is too often a depressing shanty. There is a long bar at which you are expected to drink, for to sit down is prohibited, or apparently so, for there are never any chairs, and in a country where men spit copiously the sawdust is not the most inviting seat. The price of beer and other liquors is just about twice as much as it is in England, and the German lagers are often quite wholesome. The proprietor is burdened with restrictions. He is not permitted to employ barmaids to serve. He has to be on the alert lest anyone is seen gambling with cards in his house. He must not sell anything to a minor, and he is heavily loaded by taxation, both by the State and Federal Governments. Thus when one does see a saloon it is not the most inviting place in the world.

Indeed, it is only too evident that the temperance faddists of California have done for the saloon just what the fanatics of England have done in recent legislature. They have gradually lowered the tone of the public-house by oppressing the trade. By making the publican a social outcast, they have fondly imagined that they were on the right road to mitigate the evils said to be connected with his trade. By compelling a man to drink in discomfort, and by curtailing the facilities

for drinking at all, they have assumed, without a shred of justification, that they were allaying the evils of drink. By preventing, or trying to prevent, a man by law from drinking, they, with that usual ignorance of human nature which they invariably display, believe they are breaking him of the habit. As if the fascination of getting that which somebody—especially an unpopular Government—says you shall not have, was not always one of the greatest stimulants which the drink evil or any other has ever had! And that is why the liquor laws in California are such a farce; that is why in England they are every day becoming not only more unjust to publican and public, but more impotent to deal with the evil of drunkenness.

The wayside pub. is an essential feature of every civilised country, provided it is not made ten times more iniquitous than it would be under normal conditions, by rabbit-brained "temperance reformers." Never was it more essential than in California, where it is being strangled, corrupted, or wiped out (to make way for the illicit substitute), by a country that boasts so loudly of its freedom, of its liberty.

I am reminded of having read somewhere of an American definition of liberty which I may give here without being irrelevant. Here it is: "Let every man do as he likes; if he won't, make him."

California makes a great feature of its wine industry, and some of its burgundies, if of a light nature, are not at all bad. Yet, though large areas of the State are given over to the production of the grape for this purpose, the traveller, and often

the native, is prohibited by law from supporting a trade for which the country is to some extent famed. The wine is so innocuous that it would not intoxicate a water-rat, but, on the other hand, it is quite wholesome, and certainly far more so than the impure water one is frequently compelled to drink as a substitute. But so long as the Californian is content to be sat on and "bossed" by any bigoted fanatic who calls himself a reformer, so long will these things be. Light wines are copiously drunk by all classes of people in many places of Southern Europe where the water is impure, with no evil result. Has the Californian "prohibitionist" ever considered for a moment the appalling number of people stricken down every year by malaria and other diseases that can be directly traced to bad water? Does he realise that he (or, more often, she) is largely responsible for all those deaths and crippled lives by prohibiting the use of a wholesome beverage and by forcing the people of a thirsty land to fall back on water, that too often reeks with disease germs or injurious mineral compounds? There are few other countries in the world where the people would permit themselves to be treated with such insufferable intolerance, such autocratic legislation.

Talking of the drink question—of which I shall have more to say anon—recalls a favourite anecdote of Dean Reynolds Hole. A drunkard, on being told that teetotalism would prolong his life, replied: "I have no doubt whatever of that. I once tried it for a day, and that day was the longest I ever spent in my life."

But before I "quit" the subject I am reminded that the latest article in the "wet list," the sale of which has been prohibited by the law of America, is *green-tea*. I wonder which will be wiped out next, the soda fountains or the bottle of ginger-pop. But surely a Native Son, whose constitution can stand anything that can float an iron wedge, is not so easily undermined that *green-tea* will upset him!

It was on Gaviota Pass that I had my first experience of Californian roads, as they appear before the ravages of the winter storms have been repaired. It was here that I realised the blessing of a steady and powerful horse, even for the shafts of a light and spidery rig. In many places the road, often an inferior track at best, was entirely obliterated, and one moment one had to plough through heavy sand, at the next to ford deep water or, what was worse still, to forsake the trail altogether and, trusting to providence, make one's way through the primeval bush which was littered with boulders and fallen trees. But when the winter rains have ceased a gang of men with ploughs, blasting powder, wagons, a string of mules and other tackle set forth to put the roads "in shape." This generally consists of easing the grades, levelling the surfaces, and filling up the "wash-outs" with stones and soil. No effort is made to lay any macadam or metalling of any sort, and one learns to be content with a surface of soil which in a few weeks becomes pulverised into dust, the latter often being eight inches thick. Of course, the work is mainly all undone when the floods again come down the

following winter, and springtime brings a repetition of the job.

The creeks, which do not run dry in summer, are sometimes spanned by what is called a "corduroy bridge," which usually consists of rough logs, or pieces of lumber, laid transversely upon two heavy balks of pine which reach from one side of the gulch to the other. Needless to say, many of these bridges are so often out of repair that the traveller utters a prayer of thanks if he lands safely on the other side. When they have approached the dangerous stage a cautious local authority labels them with a warning indicating that they are unsafe, adding that should you pass over them you do so at your own risk. In any case you are commanded, under penalty of a fine, to proceed not faster than at "a walking pace," which does not make the journey any more enjoyable. But, if these timely warnings would be more gratifying were there some alternative, other than that of making a detour of, perhaps, twenty miles, they are mildly courteous compared with such legends as, "Prepare to meet thy God," or "All hope abandon ye who enter here," which some religious fanatic and a paint-pot have inscribed on the frail scantlings of so many of these decrepit bridges. Another popular inscription, and one that is obviously a home-made product of the vagrant prophet's mind, is this: "Knowest thou where thou art going? To Hell!" I was certainly sometimes only too conscious of a sinking sensation when, for example, one of my old mare's legs would crash through a rotten board and I had to alight and help her

rescue it from the abyss, to the tune of cracking timbers.

Yet, if one considers what a comparatively few years have elapsed since the Franciscan fathers first plodded through these untrodden wilds, leaving behind them El Camino Real, upon which I travelled; if one recognises the tremendous difficulties which have beset the road-makers ever since, the great distances they have to keep in repair, the lack of stone, the fury of the winter deluge, and the traffic, that has increased out of all proportion to the development of the roads, the latter are wonderfully good. It is not too much to say that, in this matter at any rate, the persistent energy and that unflagging determination of the American character, in the face of stupendous enterprises and often crushing disappointment, must command the admiration of any stranger. Thousands of miles of country roads now have oiled surfaces, thousands are daily sprinkled with water. Who is there, seeing what in so short a time has already been achieved, can doubt that California will, in a few years, fulfil her promise and have one of the finest highways in the world—a great thoroughfare, good for all kinds of traffic, from the border of Mexico to the Oregon line? Both the State and the counties wisely realise that in these days of many tourists and much motor traffic the progress of a country, that can never be efficiently served by railways, must depend almost entirely upon the condition of its roads.

Although I passed through some lovely glades studded with noble trees standing deep in young hay, and wide fields of cereals still green with the

sap of spring—the whole often recalling some grand old English park—in the country which lies west of the ruins of Santa Ynez Mission, I soon became convinced that the timber of these smaller Californian valleys will before very long cease to exist, just as it has already ceased to exist in the greater valleys. For on every side the great deciduous oaks, as well as the evergreen, or live-oaks, which at one time must have covered the earth with their shade, are fast crumbling to decay. It seems as though their days, like the days of the Indians, were numbered, that their span of life were drawing to a close, and few, indeed, are the saplings to stand in their stead. Stricken by what appears to be natural decay, infested with parasites which often, before May is out, have devoured every leaf, and smothered in sweeping webs of grey lichen, or "Spanish moss," the old trees are rapidly passing out of life. Hundreds of miles of country are already bare, a few stumps only remaining of the primitive forest. They are seldom cut down, save for firewood, for their trunks are almost always hollow, and even for purposes of shade they are distrusted, owing to the suddenness with which their great limbs so frequently fall to earth. Indeed, the fall of one of these enormous boughs is often so alarming that the camper, once he has realised the danger, is not likely to take shelter beneath their shade, let it be ever so tempting. There is no knowing when a bough may fall. It may occur in the silent night, or in the sultry hour of noon. Not a leaf, perhaps, is stirring; no sound breaks the inviolate hush; even the cricket's chirrup has ceased. But,

PALMS AND PEPPER TREES

A MOUNTAIN TRAIL: SANTA YNEZ

SANTA BARBARA

without warning, an almost imperceptible tremor thrills the tree from root to topmost twig. There is a moment of hesitation, a holding of the breath, a faint sound as of snapping tendons, and the mighty limb is torn away as though by some invisible power. There is a thunderous crash, the earth reverberates with the shock, and a cloud of rising dust, mingled with madly whirling leaves, rises like smoke from the crumpled, mangled wreck. Seldom does a day pass, even in the quietest of summer valleys, when the earth does not tremble with the resonant murmur of some falling oak.

But if these broken, done old trees arouse a sensation of pity in the traveller's mind, they look even more melancholy when wrapped in a swathing pall of "moss." Of their appearance in this garb I had a weird experience when on the hill-tops a few miles south of Santa Maria. The dawning had come late, owing to a dense grey mist, and I was awakened to it just in time to see the indistinct form of a dog making off with the last remnant of my already much-reduced larder. Under the circumstances, there was no alternative but to "pull out" into the mist on an unsubstantial breakfast of coffee and "crackers," and trust to finding a store somewhere during the day. My road took a winding course between low, rounded hills sparsely covered with the haggard, moss-hung oaks. On every side the mist drifted, hither and thither, in slow-moving billows of a cold, sad grey. No sound broke the sepulchral silence save the muffled footsteps of the horse in the deep dust. No sign of life stirred the infinite hush. But, on every side the gaunt, leafless

limbs of the stricken oaks, swathed in their clinging cerements of grey, loomed out of the swirling mist. In forms that were distorted, unreal, and grotesque, they haunted that dim world of vapour. Like gigantic bats of some nether region, with trailing, webby pinions half raised for flight, they floated into sight as the veil for a moment was torn asunder, only to dissolve again into invisibility. Like grim witches, hovering with ghoulish intent over an earth that is dead, cleaving the dim abyss with bony limbs and shredded vestments, the haggard trees peopled the deathly quietude with the phantasmal wraiths of some hell-bound villain's dream. Here, where the leafless branches, lean and gnarled, were so near that I could more easily see their bearded lichen, hanging long and straight and pointed, the drip, drip of water upon the hard, resounding earth broke through the gloom with a distinctness so intense that I instinctively felt the chilling loneness of some dark, damp cavern. The moss-encrusted boughs were the arches of the under-world, the pendant, pointed beards the stalactites which drip in the cold filters of earth.

For miles I wandered on through these goblin-haunted groves. Hours passed away and noon was approaching. But still the impenetrable cloud of mist blanketed the earth. No sound was there, no living thing to awaken the tomb-like hush. Weird, uncanny ruins of these old trees were again, like crumpled human figures, rudely covered with the grey sheets of death; now like grim, lean vultures, skipping with shaggy, noiseless wings amid the silent slain, and, anon, there would

be one like the hairy Pan, bent in sorrow eternal for the herds of the forest which were no more, yea, even for the grey old forest itself, which was returning again to the earth which had given it birth so many years ago.

Thus did the often too familiar companions of my journey grow into strange and spectral fancies in the shrouding wisps of cloud. Whether it were my depressing stomach, still pleading for breakfast, or that despondency which often so heavily weighs upon the mind when a dull day interrupts the continuous sunshine of such a country as California, I know not. But I do know, so endless and so melancholy did my way through that phantasmagoria of evil shapes seem to grow, that had a gramophone struck up " Home, Sweet Home " in the midst of it all, I think I should have wept.

Then, with a burst of splendour, the sun came suddenly out. The earth was bright with flowers, blue lupins and golden poppies. Glistening pearls of dew beaded every green blade, every twig, every bearded bough. The fields, the trees, even the shining backs of the cattle steamed with ascending vapour. Meadow larks alighted on the fence-rails, the black broad-arrow on their yellow breasts swelling with song ; red-winged blackbirds discussed nesting prospects down among the wet and leaning barley. With the clearing atmosphere came the far-away voice of the sea, and the first man I spoke to in the clean, bright, flourishing little town of Santa Maria (which, by the way, provided everything the hungry could desire, even to the excellent strawberries) was a hospitable Scot, who bore the good name of John Dodd.

CHAPTER X

WAYSIDE HOUSEKEEPING

BEING my own housekeeper, so to speak, when on this camping tour, I was put in direct contact with the provisioning of the daily table, or, to put it more truthfully, the inverted butter keg, which for me served the same purpose. True, one wants but little, or rather, is able to do without, the more sumptuous fare of life, when on the road. Yet my gastronomical ambitions would ever ascend beyond canned pork and beans, even beyond the comparatively succulent embalmed tongue. "Flap-jack" I seldom baked, if I could get ready-made bread of the more popular brand. Thus it was seldom that I passed a wayside store without making some purchases, a precaution that one soon learns to exercise, for one never knows, in California, when or where the next store may be found. In this way I learned to "get acquainted" with the native groceries—to use a comprehensive term—and their prices—a feature of life usually outside the sphere of the hotel tourist.

I had come to California full of the hope that I should be able to revel in an abundance of good, cheap fruit, but, in so far as the Southern part of the State is concerned, I was disappointed. I spent the greater part of the best season for

oranges in the very centre of the Southern ranches, yet I sought in vain for the realisation of my hopes. For, explain it how you will, I have purchased better oranges at a lower price in Leadenhall Market and in New York than I could find anywhere in California. There are some grades of "seedless navels" of fair quality (and so they ought to be at sixty cents a dozen !), but they are not equal in flavour and texture, though they may be as big as pumpkins—for your American too often forgets quality in his craze for size—to many Florida, Java, or Valencia samples which cost very much less. In explanation of this state of affairs one Californian will inform you that all the finest qualities are "shipped East." But are they ? The wise men of the East tell me a different tale. Another, in answer to your question, will shrug his shoulders and mutter the words "cornering" and "trusts," or an equivalent. But these iniquitous combinations, evil as they are, do not, so far as I am aware, affect the *quality* of the fruit, though we know that even in California unripe oranges are "sweated," and ripe ones ruined by being kept too long in cold storage. But, in any case, if the trusts are all-powerful, and everybody knows they are, though at the time of writing a feeble effort, called by some a "sop," is being made to curb their tyranny, it only makes one reflect and wonder the more how the citizens of any country, most of all of America, can meekly submit to the despotism of any unscrupulous arbiter who has dollars enough to buy up a season's crop, and who is tyrant enough to make everybody else submissively toe the line,

while he marshals the prices and pockets the profits of his iniquitous business. Yet, I sometimes think that I have less respect for that ostensible courage, self-confidence, and independence of a people who suffer themselves to be the victims of, and fooled by, any bullying capitalist who comes along, than I have for the latter himself. What an insufferable farce is all this talk of a "free country," liberty, and democracy! What worshippers of golden calves are the people who live in the fog of such delusions!

Yet another grumble have I to make, and this time it is against the foolish practice of "topping" fruit baskets which prevails in the West. You buy a punnet of strawberries, or grapes, which looks delightful. But alas! when that select top layer has departed what remains is a mere collection of small, often mildewed, fruit. This deception is the custom everywhere. Everybody has got quite used to it, and know that the "berries," or whatever they may be, "grow smaller downwards through the box." It was first practised, no doubt, as a deliberate fraud, but as such it scarcely any longer exists, because everybody sees through it. But so fond of illusion is the Yankee—he battens on it—he still looks with admiring eyes at that tempting top layer, still cheats himself into believing that the bottom one is as good, though he knows quite well it is not. It is like "prohibition." The evil is glossed over, but the disease festers within.

Now, I am aware, from years of practical contact with the business of gardening and kindred rural pursuits, that "topping" your baskets is

not only a dishonest proceeding, but an exceedingly foolish one. The practice is not confined to California, though there it remains in all its glaring stupidity, and there, coming from "old-fashioned England," did I least expect to find it. I have called it dishonest because it deceives, or is intended to deceive. (It deceived me, for I thought American fruit growers were more advanced in their methods.) But if a salesman in a London market, say Covent Garden, had any suspicions that the lots he was selling were so packed, he would turn the baskets upside-down and sell the contents *as they are*—bottom upwards. I have called the habit a stupid one for this reason. If the fruiterers and growers each knew their business, they would realise that it would pay them infinitely better to grade the fruit into two or three qualities, when each would fetch its proper price. The best would not then be sacrificed for the price of the bad, and everybody would be squarely dealt with.

But this fatuous practice is not confined to the realm of fruit and vegetables. There are, for example, many kinds of meat, such as bacon, ham, and beef, which are sliced and put up in glass jars—a convenient form for camp life, and most people in California take to the open life at one time or another. From outward appearance the contents of these jars look very attractive, but open one and you will find that while a layer of nice slices has been neatly arranged all round the interior, so as to show through the glass, the centre is filled up with scrappy bits! That anyone can find time, especially in America, to

so cunningly arrange that deception passes my comprehension. Yet there it is, in every store in California.

But, to return to the subject of California's fruit, I readily admit that, though I was disappointed with the oranges, and found strawberries in most districts to be tasteless and seedy, the grapes, cherries, apricots, and peaches were all that one could desire, both in quality and price, always provided they were purchased direct from the grower. In the stores the two last are frequently expensive and bear the unmistakable signs of having been gathered before they were ripe. And most of these fruits are too often sacrificed to the blemishing effect of cold storage, which latter, though it undoubtedly has many estimable features, is not an altogether unmixed blessing.

Everywhere I went in Southern California, vegetables were very indifferent in quality and high priced, but with a few exceptions, such as, for instance, butter, bacon, and eggs, the more ordinary necessities of life are just about the same price as they are in England. Eggs are notoriously bad in quality, so bad indeed that it has become a custom never to serve one which has not had its contents first examined by the cook! If, for example, one goes into a restaurant and asks for a humble boiled egg, it is brought to table with its contents turned out into a glass, and very mashed-up and uninviting does it appear. Nevertheless, experience has no doubt proved that it is wiser to eat it thus, than run the risk of an explosion at the breakfast table. But, though I

EUCALYPTUS TREES

IN CAMP AT PACIFIC GROVE

never could summon enough courage to tackle one in that messy condition, I can understand the subtle distinction between the shelled clam, already alluded to, and the shelled egg. The one suggests possible deception, the other is deception unmasked, the naked reality dished up in transparent glass! Fresh meat is cheaper than it is in England, but, excepting pork, the most popular meat in the West, by the way, it is very indifferent in quality. Perhaps the mutton is the worst, and, after having had a meal of it, I have always felt as conscious of having done so as a dog guilty of sheep-worrying. But when it is goat, preferably the white variety of the hills, it is tolerably good.

I have said that the cost of living in California is not much, if any, dearer than it is in England. But in small matters the traveller will find that the above is scarcely true. One can, for example, seldom buy anything for less than a nickel (five cents). It, for all practical purposes, takes the place of the British penny, though its value is twopence-halfpenny. The daily newspaper, the box of matches (a big one certainly), the cheap cigar, a ride on a street car, glass of beer, all such are generally five cents. And in these incidentals the stranger will find that a franc in Paris, or a shilling in London, will go farther than a quarter (twenty-five cents, or "two-bits" as it is often called) will in California, though I do not say that the argument would hold good if continued into the region of larger amounts. I contend that there is not much doubt but that much of the careless waste of money, the unthriftiness of the

Westerner, may be traced to the very trifling consideration which he displays towards a nickel or its double, the dime. He does not look upon a dime with as much respect as a Britisher, not necessarily a Scot, bestows upon a sixpenny-piece. "It's only a dime," he says, forgetful that but ten make a dollar, with the inevitable result, he is often hard-up, he ever clamours for more wages, he shakes an indignant fist at the "idle rich," he is in a chronic state of hostility against someone, there is no health in him. But the shrewd Scot, the Jap, the Chinaman, the Scandinavian, and other aliens, who know how to take care of the dimes, often prosper exceedingly in California and, by doing so, earn the distrust and the hatred of the Native Son, who scorns to follow their good example. It is the old, indolent spirit of Mexico that so many a Californian has become possessed of, and many of the less thrifty, less discreet individuals of such races as the English and Irish, slide into indifference in precisely the same manner, once they have settled in the State. To this idle, come-day, go-day nature may also be traced the almost universal credit system which prevails in the West. To live "on tick" is as much a part of California as the sunshine, and the storekeeper is just as keen to get a customer to open a running account with him, as the rural Native Son and the Mexican are to foster the habit. In the large department stores and best shops more practical methods prevail, but, otherwise, "credit" is universal. And here, again, do we find a direct encouragement to spend beyond one's means, another source of

dissatisfaction and unrest among those whose wages, though big, will never be big enough until their whole view of life, their very nature, is changed. The Native Son would also do well to get rid of the idea that it is stingy to be economical or thrifty.

While on this topic I am reminded of the Western custom of never, or seldom, splitting a nickel. Thus, for the sake of illustration, if I want half a dozen oranges that are thirty-five cents a dozen, I am expected to pay twenty cents for the six, instead of half the amount (or, say, eighteen cents, seeing that half cents are not coined). Thus the shopkeeper pockets an additional five cents every time he halves a dozen. Of course, that is good business on his side, for he increases his profit by an enormous percentage ; but to the small purchaser, who does not wish to buy things in bulk, it soon becomes another matter. He is, possibly, not always up to a dozen oysters at a meal, and does not see why he should be expected to swell another man's profit by only swallowing six. If the one-cent piece were no longer in use it would be a different matter, but in the post-offices and all large stores, and most small ones, it is in daily circulation. It may be argued every man has a right to make a reduction for a quantity. True, but that is not the point of view which the shopkeeper takes. You may enter a store in California and ask the prices of a dozen small articles, such as jars of jam, canned meat, sugar, and the rest. And the reply is almost invariably " two for twenty-five," or " two pounds for fifteen cents," as the case

may be. But as you do not invariably desire to duplicate all you purchase, you must pay fifteen for one of the twenty-five cent couples, and ten cents for one pound of the " two for fifteen cents " article. The storekeeper will not reciprocate, *pro rata*, by making any reductions, no matter how many of the said couples you might wish to purchase—a remote possibility—but he has you on every one of them that you divide by only taking one.

Leaving Santa Maria, I discovered that a long wooden bridge, spanning perhaps a quarter of a mile of sand and river, had been " put out of commission " by the winter floods. There was thus nothing to do but drag through the heavy sand, axle-deep in some places, and ford the river which was still a considerable body of water. Had it not been for the tracks of others upon the sand, I should have been more fearful of entering the flood. But my old mare was discretion embodied with stability. She took the water like a spaniel, and, though I once had a momentary vision of a sail down-stream when the water lapped into the body of the rig, she took me over with safety and, I think, some little pride. Thence the road wound over a hilly, treeless country of meagre grass, with a few stretches of grain in the valleys and the resonant voices of red-winged blackbirds which thronged the green with their wonderful iridescent jet and flashes of vivid, flaming red. I shall ever have a friendly thought for these companionable birds, not only because of their peculiarly musical notes, wonderful colour-contrasts and fearless trust in the passer-by, but because they were often the

only living creatures, save the verminous ground squirrel, that I saw upon many of the roadsides of the Southern State.

At Berros, a pretty little village of orchards and trim bungalows, served by a branch line, and watered by a cheering stream, I camped one evening with the prospect of seeing El Pizmo and the sea early next day. Here, again, I heard those disquieting murmurs of unrest which prevail among the ranchers of the Golden State. This time it was a man, generously hospitable to me, the stranger, who had bought a fairly good house, a walnut ranch, and some hill-side brush, the whole covering twenty-one acres, for $6500. In a good season he told me that he realised a return in walnuts worth $600 (i.e. £120 per annum for an outlay of £1300). Not a bad percentage for one's capital, it is true, but not enough when one is dependent upon seasons and in a country where labour is so expensive. He was no more content with his lot than I had expected to find him. Indeed, he was merely hanging on, so to speak, anxious to sell out for the initial outlay and to give his improvements and years of labour to the bargain. Again it was the old tale I so often heard :

" Yes, sir, it's a sight easier to buy than to sell in California. If I can get rid of this place I guess I'll try Oregon. They say it's better over there. Or may be, I'll just go right back East. It's hard scratchin' to make a living in 'most any old place on this side, I reckon."

Though the Pacific was a full three miles away, as the crow flies, I could hear the thunder of its breakers reverberating through the earth upon

which I slept that night, with an ominous, insistent roar.

I had been led to picture El Pizmo as a kind of Californian Nice by the descriptive folders already referred to. Was it not also tremendously advertised at the railway stations along with Santa Cruz, Pacific Grove, and the rest of the " all star company " of marine resorts ? Had I not somewhere seen a picture of its " speed way " (motor-race track), " the biggest and fastest in the West," with flags flying and crowds cheering themselves dumb ; of its " casinos," clam factories, and other alluring delights ? Moreover, I had joined company with another wanderer, an American, who was trying to shake off malaria and, incidentally, to " see America," by making a trip by road from Arizona to Oregon. He, too, had heard the fame of El Pizmo noised abroad, and had travelled nearly a thousand miles encouraged by the prospect of eating clam, of which he was very fond, on its native shore at Pizmo.

But, alas, for our fair anticipations. The entrance to this famed resort was bad enough, and our souls sank to the precise level of the squalid surroundings through which we passed, to the level of those dilapidated fowl-runs and their mopy occupants. We were one with the condensed milk cans and other kitchen refuse, the old, rusty bedsteads cast down by the wayside, the wide expanse of singularly dreary mud, littered with all manner of refuse, and with the atmosphere of slovenliness and desertion which prevailed. Nevertheless, we courageously clung to the hour-glass of our diminishing hopes. The

sea frontage alone would surely put all this dinginess into forgetfulness. And . . .

But here let me take an extract, crude as it is, from my note-book :

. . . " Tying our horses to telegraph poles, R. and I walk to the beach, plodding wearily down a narrow alley, bounded by shabby cottages and dilapidated fences, and littered by clam-shells, and heavy drifts of fine white sand. A place of discomforting draughts and creaky timbers. . . . Two rocky headlands, thirty miles apart, embrace a magnificent bay of an intense ultramarine. With a deep, impelling roar, stupendous breakers follow one another round a sublime curve with measured, rhythmic dignity. On an increasing wind the froth of the waters whirls along the clean, dry sand in broken fragments of crystal. To northward are great tottering cliffs and dark shaggy-headed rocks. From them is borne upon the north-west wind a hollow, cavernous whispering, the blended murmurings of sullen strife. To the south are rugged dunes of sand, blowing white in the windy sunshine. A vaster loneliness of sea and shore I think I never saw. There is no boat, no sign of human life. Three curlews and the ribs of some long-forsaken wreck are the only occupants of this wind-blown strand. . . . Standing back some little distance, but still among the sand and waste of winter storms, a few weather-bleached houses offer " rooms for rent " with apologetic modesty. Many of their window-panes are broken, the sand is silted up in drifts against the doors. The planks of their verandahs gape with holes and have an empty, desolate sound.

Beyond, and also among the sand and clam-shells, is a large building, gaunt and forbidding in aspect. From a tall flag pole on its roof a rope trails dejectedly like the lash of a whip on the wind. Turning to make a further exploration of the village with the object of finding, if possible, a store, however humble, my friend, drawing on his leather gauntlet gloves, remarks, with something akin to disappointment in his voice: 'El Pizmo, the comin' fashionable resort of the Pacific Slope. I reckon it *is* comin'. It ain't here yet by a long chalk, anyway."

Here we parted for a while, R. going in search of clams, which he never got, though I had suggested the cannery as the most likely place! I to look for a store. This I discovered with less difficulty than I had anticipated, and it was from the proprietor of this tiny, much overcrowded establishment, that I learned something of the fame of Pizmo. He pointed out to me the "tent city"—then in its out-of-season deshabille—a collection of wooden skeleton frames set in rows, grass and weeds growing between the boarded floors. He gave me much surprising information upon the rapid extension of Pizmo and the fabulous increase in land value (if he had not mentioned this I would have taken him to be an honester man). Could I not stay for a week? He would give me free grazing. Would I not like to go in for a "genu-wine snap, a corner block, facing the sea"? In reply to my inquiry as to whether Pizmo had "a season," a period of awakening, so to speak, he said, "Bet your life! we'll be in

LIVE OAKS AND TROUT WATER : SANTA MARGARITA

NEAR EL PASO DEL ROBLES

(The Pass of the Oaks

full blast in a week. Every tent full to the lid and folk glad to lay out 'most anywheres."

Later, as I packed a gunny sack with my purchases and put it on the rig, he wished me "Good-bye," and, with that encouraging urbanity common to his tribe, bid me "call again" as I drove away.

Leaving Pizmo, the road cut across the rocky, picturesque hills at the back of the village. Northwards, the grassy slopes again were blued by innumerable lupins and blue-eyed grass, a species of iris, and again we dipped to the flat grain lands along the cliffs. It was here that I discovered, when endeavouring to find shelter from the strong and bitterly cold wind, the old fisherman referred to in another chapter. Pushing on to San Luis Obispo in the vain hope of striking a more genial climate, we were forced, as darkness fell, to spend the night in a draughty lane, a few willow bushes being all the shelter which that treeless land could afford. Though San Luis Obispo is a thriving town with fine streets and shops, a passing glance at its ancient mission was, for reasons already given, more than enough. By the following evening we had passed over the Santa Lucia mountains by a fine new road, and, leaving the wind behind us, dropped down into the beautifully wooded valley of Santa Margarita. Here our horses and ourselves enjoyed a well-earned week-end rest under a genial sun and amid a forest of magnificent oaks, not haggard and moss-grown here, yet falling rapidly before the axe. With firewood at nine dollars per cord at San Luis Obispo, the finest oak that ever lived commands

no more respect than its value in dollars. Yet how appalling is the waste of timber on every side! Nor can I forget the lively little rainbow trout, the garrulous woodpeckers, and the one and only specimen of the yellow-billed magpie (an exclusively Californian species) which I saw on my Western travels.

As R. was anxious not to miss seeing Yosemite, we parted company at Santa Margarita. My friend's road lay in an easterly direction, via the Tulare Desert. Mine was to follow, for the greater part of the way, the Salinas river from its birth among the watercress, rushes, and tadpoles at Santa Margarita, to its junction with the sea in Monterey Bay.

But, before going on, let me warn the reader that he must not imagine all the places mentioned in the two preceding chapters to be as beautiful as are their names. One could wish that they were so, that the towns and hamlets were as picturesque as is their nomenclature. But in America, alas! the most hideous and sordid towns are too often called after those cities of the old world with which we associate all that which is most artistic and classical. To go back a little way, let us take Naples (Santa Barbara Co.). Here is one of the shabbiest little hamlets conceivable, consisting of a few dilapidated wooden buildings huddled together in a hollow of the treeless hills. There is a forge without a blacksmith, a gloomy hotel without a licence or a privilege left to its name; a post-office which I could never find open; a cottage, or, perhaps two, repelling in its outward appearance of

neglect ; a church, forbidding in its ugliness and looking as equally deserted as the cottage, perched on the brow of a wind-swept knoll, a railway siding nearly a mile away, and beyond that the bare cliff walls and the distant sea. Such sweet-sounding names as Los Crucis and Los Olivos might create in the minds of those who had not seen the little villages, so out-at-elbows and so inhospitable in their wooden modernity, some visions of romance and rural quiet. And Santa Margarita ! With what a saddening squalor does that single row of evil-smelling stores and third-rate saloons besmirch so delightful a name.

CHAPTER XI

IN THE SALINAS VALLEY

If they were to be wiped out of the memory for ever, there are few features of the Salinas Valley after which I would send a single sigh of regret. Two vast impressions, that seem to obliterate all minor details, dominate the picture as I look back over that 130 miles. The first is a white, sun-beaten road that wanders over a vast, undulating plain of withering grass and naked oak trees—the latter stripped of every vestige of green by caterpillars. There are few, if any, streams of water fit to drink or even pleasing to look upon. The sun is insufferably hot, the air sultry and enervating. Seldom does one see a bird or wild animal, save that Californian rat, the ground squirrel, with which the country is infested as by a plague. For days the same drab uniformity, the same sad scene of stricken vegetation, the same arid, unkindly soil keeps pace with the traveller.

The other main impression covers the second part of the distance. It is an almost treeless plain, swept by cold, eternal winds and cutting blasts of driven sand—an immense, inhospitable wilderness of level fields, straight monotonous roads, hedged by telegraph poles and, at set intervals, windmills madly whirling and screaming, as I passed them by, the complaining wail of rusty joints.

But, happily, there are some incidents that are not wholly subjugated by these memories which I would fain forget. There is El Paso de Robles, a delightful town, whose green, shady avenues of locust trees, with their pendent blossoms, pink and white, flooding the air with fragrance; with its cool, well-watered lawns, fine trees, and comfortable hotels, made the handiwork of man appear to me, the dusty traveller, so much pleasanter a thing than the sunburned, disease-infested country of Nature's thwarted purposes. I shall ever remember a delightful camp, delightful because of its cool shade, its quietude and freedom from dust, by the baths-house and those soda and hot sulphur springs for which El Paso de Robles is famed. The attendant, who waits upon the visitors who come to these "healing waters" and mud-baths, showed me the interior of the establishment, which was much like any other of its kind, save for the general appearance of simplicity which prevailed. Perhaps the baths so excel in curative properties that they need no elaborate architectural or other attractive embellishments to draw the patronage of the maimed and the halt. Certainly the mud-baths (my guide's proudest possession) were severe, almost primitive, in their crude simplicity. They reminded me of those wooden lids one sees on the pavements outside shops and public-houses in country towns, only, when opened, a volume of vile-smelling steam arose, and all was impenetrable darkness below. But, after staring intently for some time into those dripping depths, one could faintly make out the hot, black mud,

with its slimy surface an eruption of unsavoury bubbles. To the balks of timber which walled the hole was fixed a ladder, down which, so I supposed, the suffering visitors were expected to crawl to their doom.

"You don't mean to say you put people in there?" I asked the attendant, for a more fearsome looking pit I had seldom seen.

"Bet yer life I do," was his ready and cheerful response. "And I reckon it'll boil the malaria out of anybody in ten minutes." With the last words he dropped the heavy, steam-soddened lid with a bang. I did not venture to question the statement.

Now, in England, as well as on the European Continent, a man who went out of his way to show a stranger a place of this sort, would expect a tip. But it is not always so in the West. This good-natured enthusiast—for he loved his baths and was, I doubt not, a supreme artist in lathering and massage, not to mention "boiling"—instead of expecting any recompense, presented me with a bunch of English "May," which he had brought from somebody's garden, and which to me was redolent with old associations. Furthermore, he happened to be one of the few Americans I have met in the West who did not persistently talk about himself.

I have never been a patron of those medicinal waters which, in certain places, gush out of Mother Nature's dispensing laboratories. And in California how often, when in some tired wilderness, where they only prevailed, have I not prayed for some purer fountain. Yet is there not a savour of primitive romance in the waters

of old wells of healing, even in the wells of America, which the Indians knew and worshipped ere the coming of the white man and his " bad medicine ? " I have often wondered whether it is owing to a genuine belief in the curative properties of the waters, or some other reason, that the Americans are such copious drinkers at these mineral springs ? At any rate, and though I had always held that a Welsh Nonconformist minister on holiday could drink any six ordinary men under the table in fluid of this sort, yet he, even he, must give place to the Western Yankee. Stay for a few hours by any one of these medicinal springs of California (and they are legion), and you will be convinced that my words are true. When I was at El Paso de Robles the sulphur-well (which was, by the way, much more popular than the soda spring, probably because it was nastier) was constantly being drawn upon. The plate-layer of the railway on his way past would turn in for a glass (there was no charge), the teamster would leave his team, the grocer's boy his delivery wagon, the nursemaid her charges, the policeman his beat, the hobo his weary way upon the railroad track, the labourer his homeward trend, to turn aside to the well and there drink half a pint of the nauseous potion from the yellow-stained glass.

From San Miguel mission, a melancholy ruin atrociously disfigured and abased by some modern philistine with a taste for corrugated iron, El Camino Real leaves the Salinas Valley, making its way over the sunburned hills to the valley of the San Antonio River. Here, again, save for the band of glossy green cotton trees which lined

the sandy river, was a monotonous, thirsty wilderness of almost leafless oaks, withered grass, and dwindling streams, whose waters vilely stank with the sulphurous fumes of the nether world. There were few ranches to relieve the dullness of the way. The sun was mercilessly hot, the road rocky, or deep and heavy with sand. By the wayside some violet monkshood, blue lupins, and poppies were yielding up their lives to the sun. The burden of drought lay wearily on the land, and ever and anon, borne upon the silent waves of heat, there came a still hotter waft of stifling air, the breath of some far-off forest fire.

Passing through Jolon (pronounced Ho-lon), an uninviting collection of houses, tumbled together as if by some odd chance, but which, nevertheless, provided a horse-trough and some tolerably good, though still alkaline, water, I was hailed by a voice that was familiar. And there, seated on a bench at the door of a wooden shack that had once been a saloon, I saw a one-legged man whom I had met a week or more ago. Though I had passed him by he had overtaken me, and waited my arrival at Jolon with a lively pleasure at having got there first. Despite his one leg, he had undertaken to walk from Los Angeles to Napa, a good five hundred miles. He was a well-informed, light-hearted acquaintance, who knew the West as a bee knows its hive, and, though the absence of his leg no doubt brought him sympathy, his cheery optimism always made him friends by the way, and I suspect there were not many "blind pigs" in California of which he was not an honorary member. Oddly enough, he never

A HILLSIDE RANCH

OLD BARN : NEAR SANTA BARBARA

referred to his loss. He appeared to be in no need of money. He walked because he liked walking. It afforded an opportunity to drop in at wayside houses, and set people a-wondering as to who and what he was.

This innate curiosity of the Western American (he was an Easterner himself) entertained him as it always amused me. He cut a strange figure walking along the dusty Californian roads with a crutch in one hand, walking-stick in the other, and it was remarkable that he carried neither food nor clothing with him. There was something of the town dandy in his well-brushed bowler hat, shaven chin, and neat grey suit, and his speech and manner had (begging the pardon of my American readers), the unassuming, gentlemanly air of the well-bred. Soon after leaving Jolon, he persuaded me to go on ahead, which I did, little expecting to see him again, But nearly a week later, when entering a little town in the Salinas Valley one Sunday morning, there he was, sitting in the sun, talking and drinking his ale amid a little knot of loafers at a saloon door, and awaiting me with a beaming smile of triumph! Though he was evasive as any woodcock, light-hearted as a school-boy, I had no reason to disbelieve his tale that, as I slept, he had stumped past me in the cool night. My only regret is that my way so soon parted from his way, for he was a brave and cheerful soul, and had a whimsical manner with which I should have dearly liked to become better acquainted.

Another man, who was somewhat of a curiosity, I came across after a long and toilsome journey of dust and intense heat as I once more (after

leaving Jolon and Pleyto, the latter a " town " of three families) entered the Salinas Valley by a mountain pass west of King's City. He had just built a tiny wayside store in a lonely spot amid the hills and, as it was the only place on twenty-three miles of road where one could procure horse-feed, a few needful groceries, and safe water, it proved to be an oasis of plenty in spite of its primitive simplicity. This old man (he must have been on the wintry side of seventy) was just the antithesis of my one-legged friend. He had once been tall, but was now bent, and his face, of which a white beard, Wellingtonian nose, and deep, troubled eyes, were the most pronounced features, wore an expression of chronic irritability. He appeared to be glad of someone who would listen to his woes, and to me he unfolded the chequered story of a long life, of good days and bad (mostly bad), of disappointed hopes, and frustrated ambitions. It was not without a touch of scorn that he told me of the many Englishmen who came over in his young days, who wedded Spanish heiresses, and thus came into possession of vast lands and wealth. Towards them he appeared to nurse a certain vague hostility, but it was only too evident that he now repented not having at least tried to follow the example set by these successful, if mercenary, lovers. He recapitulated the rise and fall of one " fortune " after another, telling me how he had got into bad odour with his neighbours at Bakersfield, who ruined him by poisoning his cattle ; how, no sooner than he had settled down and decided to open a store in this lonely cañon, than a hired man had beaten his best mule

to death ; how, after digging a well for heaven knows how many months, a deluge swept down the gulch and filled it to the surface with rubble and wash ! When all had been achieved, the well reopened, and the little store partly stocked, he related, with some bitterness, how a state government imposed upon him a tax of thirteen dollars a year for the privilege of selling a few groceries to the casual passer-by. Life, to him, was evidently "just one darned thing after another."

It is possible that this peevish, complaining old man may have been the victim of his own indiscretion and folly. Or, he may, as he had said, have been too scrupulous, or unsuccessful, over a possible partnership with a señorita and her lands ; perhaps "too honest for trading with Californian thieves." At any rate, the memory of the lonely, bent old fellow, tied by bond of kinship to no one, burdened by distrust for all, rigging up his wooden shanty, baking his bread, building one more castle in the air, starting life afresh, a stranger in a strange land, with the winter of his old age hard upon him, is not a pleasant one. Of the truth of his grievance against the grocer's licence there was no doubt, for I saw the document, and, to my mind, his cause for complaint was a just one. Here was a man who had set up a store, who had procured water (it flavoured my tea with the taint of coal-oil it is true, still it was water), who, on a stretch of twenty-three miles of road was content to invest in a venture which to every passer-by would be a blessing, yet he was mulcted to the extent of

thirteen dollars a year by the State for the privilege. But it may be that only those who travel those long and dusty roads can fully appreciate what a little store and a deep well of cold water means to the wayfarer. By providing these this old man was a benefactor to his country, even more than to himself, and, rather than being taxed, he might have been awarded some more gratifying form of recognition. Yet they point to America as a democracy. They call it " a free country ! " Little wonder there is so much discontent in California ; little wonder that behind all the loud boast of the Native Son there often lurks the discomforting spectre of misgiving.

It was when crossing the bridge over the wide sandy reaches through which the Salinas river winds, to King's City, that I received my baptism of wind. And such wind ! It drove up that wide, dreary valley with unabated fury from about 10 a.m. until sundown. By stinging blasts of fine sand, which gets into one's ears, throat, and eyes, permeates one's clothing, mixes with one's food, and drives horses to the verge of madness, was I assailed in that God-forsaken place. It was, moreover, bitterly cold, whereas only the day before it had been ninety-five in the shade. There was no friendly shelter, no tree, no hedgerow to check the force of the gale, but, having done my business at King's City, beyond which I could not raise the slightest interest in its wind-riven streets, I came upon a gang of men who had found partial shelter at the lee side of some willows along the bank of the river. The " boss," seeing my plight, hailed me, and urged me to unhitch, which I did,

and join their comparatively peaceful seclusion. He told me that it blew with the same unrestrained fury every day for two-thirds of the year, and that his men always had the option of "laying off" for three to five hours each day, when the storm was at its height. Seeing that they were at work on the bridge, it was only to be expected that, even though they were employed by the hour at good wages, the privilege was gladly accepted. The "boss" was, of course, interested in "real estate," and had a few plots, as well as a ranch where his family lived, which he would part with. But, being satisfied that I was not a buyer, he let himself speak more freely, remarking: "Well, I often reckon I'm a darned fool myself to have located in such a place. Climate? Why, it's just this d——d Californian weather, wind, wind, wind all the time. It just blows the paint off that darned bridge soon as the boys gets it on. . . . Yes, sir, 'most all the land on this side belongs to Captain ——, an Englishman, and a rare buster he is. Reckon he's a millionaire alright, and married a rich wife, but that ain't near enough for him, and," he added with a laugh, "he don't often come down this way, you bet your life. He leaves this place for them's as is fools enough to stay here and get ragged by this bloomin' wind. . . . But I guess the weather is a sight worse since the earthquake."

The last expression is one constantly heard anywhere within a wide radius of San Francisco. Just as the Japan Current is said to be the origin, whether for good or ill, of every conceivable form of deviation from the average in climate

and circumstances which takes place south of Santa Barbara, so here " the earthquake " serves a similar purpose, except that it is never given credit for leaving behind it anything but what is " mean."

Of the remaining two days' travelling, that is, until I reached Salinas, where I turned aside for Monterey, I have a vague recollection of pushing along at a slow pace in the teeth of a buffeting wind, smothered by sand and dust, and of being horribly cold, though it was near the end of May. The deadly monotony of that long straight road, with its whistling telegraph wires, its plain wooden fences on either side, the iron, creaking windmills at regular intervals, their large wooden tanks of alkaline water each set on its wooden pedestal, all converging to a vanishing point perhaps ten miles ahead, with nought to relieve the dreary level of the plain on either side, save a few horses with their tails to the wind ; the thought of these things, to this day, makes me sick at heart. Yet, even in this wilderness of earth and sky and wind, I can recall some sheltering cypress trees hedging a rancher's garden, which afforded me brief respite. Even here there were, in the regions of villages through which I made my way, stalwart banks of eucalyptus trees bravely breasting the eternal gale ; there were ranchers whose generous hospitality is good to remember. And was it not in Soledad, in the blessed sunshine of that peaceful Sunday morning, ere the " trades " had awakened to scourge the day with their pitiless wrath, that I again met my ever cheerful friend of the one leg.

CHAPTER XII

MONTEREY

It was evening when, from the quiet seclusion of the wooded glen through which the road led to Monterey, I looked back upon the windswept plain of Salinas. It felt like settling down into a comfortable arm-chair before a cosy hearth, while the storms of winter raged in the outer darkness. That evening, while I gathered firewood, I found the first wild rose. And what a fire I had! No longer were flames and smoke and dangerous sparks sent whirling in furious gusts, determined to whip the forest and the fields into a galloping conflagration, but a steady pyramid of flame soared upwards from the mottled logs of sycamore and the fragrant boughs of pine. From my blanket I watched its elfish flicker on the shining leaves of live oaks, felt the humanising warmth of its embers, which, in spite of a soft drizzling rain, glowed fiery red beneath a snow-white ash until dawn. Nor can I forget the quiet, well-earned comfort of my faithful old mare, as she grazed along the sweet pastures, wet with the warm shower, which bordered the lane.

Not only was the climate delightfully soft and genial in the narrow valley through which the road to Monterey winds, but the wild flowers and green woods of oak and pine on either side were more

luxuriant than any I had seen in California. Lupins were again most in evidence, but I never felt satiated with their extravagant splendour. Here, again, they literally carpeted the fields with vivid blue, or clothed the hill-sides with acres of mauve and pale yellow bloom. Everywhere the rich green spires of the monkey-flower were flecked with buff and orange, chestnut trees, lit from ground to summit with a candelabra of white and pink, blazed amid the billowy foliage of the woods; Indian paint-brush daubed the grey rocks and undergrowth of woods with brilliant scarlet; primroses, palest sulphur-yellow, rosetted the moist, sun-warmed banks; tree-mallows, in two shades of dark and light red, made hedgerows of lavish beauty along the road-sides; wide-rayed *Coreopsis* invaded the azure of the lupin fields with stars of gold; an aromatic odour of aquatic plants from the sedgy brook on the one side, blended with the warm, sun-breath of the resinous pines which came down from the other, making a combination which, to my senses, recalled a hundred memories of moor and meadow, awakening scenes which for years had been locked in the dark places of forgetfulness.

Yet, though this sweet valley was radiant with the sunshine and flowers of early summer, it was singularly destitute of bird-life, and songsters there were none. I could not help comparing the place with many an English valley of somewhat similar character which would, at that same hour and season, be ringing with a chorus of voices. I seemed to know it and to love it because of its many familiar flowers, because of its kindly sun-

READY TO "PULL OUT"

LUPINS NEAR CASTROVILLE

shine and the fragrance of peaty moorland and aromatic swamp which it yielded. But without its singing birds, which alone can give articulate expression to the gladness of the green fields and summer woods, there remained a " quiet sense of something lost " in the landscape, a vacancy which nothing else would fill.

But when I had descended the hill some distance, and could see the bristling pines of Monterey Head brushing the western sky, could hear the undying voice of the great Pacific surges rise and fall in measured grandeur upon the rugged shores beyond, it was not the last mile stone on El Camino Real, a great bell that no longer swings, that no longer calls the matin or chimes the evening peace, not the picturesque little church " bosomed high in tufted trees," nor yet Del Monte's much-advertised attractions that enthralled me. I found myself repeating, " Little do ye know your own blessedness ; for to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labour." . . . Heaven knows I had laboured, laboured by the sweat of my face to reach this place, for a camping tour in California is not all pleasant shades and cowslip banks, and if success were the final reward of honest purpose fulfilled by dint of patient, pleasurable toil, then were success mine. Howbeit, as I entered Monterey—" the old township lying in the sands, its white windmills bickering in the chill, perpetual wind, and the first fogs of evening drawing drearily around it from the sea "—it was good to feel that all but personal touch with Stevenson which the town, for me at any rate, still yielded.

It is about thirty years since his essay on " The Old Pacific Capital " was written, and even then he regretted the invasion of modernity and fashion which threatened to swamp the old-world drowsiness of the place. But Monterey has not altered so much after all. True, some of the streets are "made up," an electric car-line runs thence to Pacific Grove, the best shops and largest hotels are in American hands. But turn aside into that maze of tumble-down shanties which, crooked, leaning and gaping as children's houses of cards, are set down on either side of the sandy tracks ; get among the boats which lie upon the beach, or take a look in at any saloon you may choose, and there you will find but little English spoken by the dark-skinned men who are idling, smoking and drinking about such places. There you will find a larger proportion of the pure Spanish type of both sexes than can be seen anywhere else in California to-day. Though I have yet to be convinced that the American himself, of the West, at any rate, is as fond of work as many suppose, the little crowds of men who loaf about the verandah of the old custom-house, who sit in the sun with their backs against the walls of a saloon, their legs across the raised wooden platform which serves as pavement, have made of idling a fine art. And if it is somewhat pathetic to see these older races—Mexican and Spanish—forced to retire to the slums, so to speak, to take a back seat, while modern America rules the roost, I should not like to offer them any condolences. It is not in them to fight for supremacy, equality, and the rest. Ambition is a word that scarce has a meaning for them. If they have re-

treated into the back streets, their lands gone, their very existence threatened, what care they? They have preserved their ancient dignity, yea, even their gentlemanly air. Content, they can thus afford to scorn the undignified rabble and rush of a nation of yesterday's making; and to live for the day is enough. But there is one thing they must have, and that is the saloon. It does not matter how small and how stuffy it may be, so long as it is a saloon, it will do.

It was when I was endeavouring to make my way through the byways of Monterey, for the main street was undergoing a much-needed repair, that I first fell in with these swarthy natives. Had it been possible, I should have pitched my camp somewhere in their quarter. But there was no suitable spot, much less was there horse-grazing sufficient for a ten-day rest which I had decided to spend in the neighbourhood. I was not altogether regretful when I ultimately found that I had the Pacific Coast Camping Grounds at Pacific Grove almost entirely to myself. Though nearly two miles from Monterey, it is a better centre for exploring the Head and coast, and, as the season had not yet opened, I was not likely to run against any of the May-Meetings, revivals, and other religious "waves" which annually invade the place. Instead of those things, was I not serenaded by a week-old bride of about sixteen years who was flattering enough to take me to be a possible lord in disguise? In passing, I am reminded that a bride of such tender years, or a debutante in Western "Society," is, by common consent and approbation, called a "bud" (ain't that just real sweet?).

The resourceful journalist who writes her up in the "Society Columns" of the Sunday newspaper may sometimes exchange the synonym for "peachlet."

Just as prim Pasadena dislikes being considered a suburb of naughty Los Angeles, so Pacific Grove is well-nigh horror-stricken if it is suggested that she has any connection whatever with Monterey. The Grove, as it is familiarly called, is, it is scarcely necessary to add, exempt from the dreadful influence of the bottle of beer. It fosters a religious and highly respectable atmosphere of tepid puritanism, and is really a very superior sort of place indeed. It "takes its name," so runs a folder before me, "from the forests of virgin pines and oaks in which it is situated." Thus we find that even the rugged old pines and hoary oaks which dwell within its hallowed radius are emblems of botanical chastity!

In parts of sanit-airy America it has become illegal to provide a cup at any public drinking fountain, the latter being so made that the thirsty must put their lips to a little nozzle of white enamel from which the water flows as from a gentle spring. These fountains are naturally much in evidence in all "dry" towns, of which, as we have seen, The Grove is one. And it has struck me that it would be better, more in keeping with the "artistic and literary atmosphere," which The Grove is said to foster, were such a contrivance as the Fountain of Virtue at Nuremberg adopted, instead of the little drinking nozzle now in use. The said Fountain of Virtue, I need hardly remind many of my readers, represents some female figures who yield water to the thirsty from that

tender source from which infant man has drawn his early nourishment since the days of baby Cain and Abel. The Fountain of Virtues! How apropos that would be among the "virgin pines" of The Grove! Furthermore, would it not be an outward and visible sign of that inward artistic and literary temperament over which The Grove spreads her maternal wings? True, the ladies in the original might be rather insufficiently clad for the tastes of modern America, but that deficiency can always be remedied.

But, though I bitterly resent the "Thank God I am not as other towns are" attitude which Pacific Grove affects towards the grey old mother city, I am ready to give The Grove all the credit which its picturesque surroundings and comfortable "homes" deserve. It were base ingratitude on my part to forget the warm hospitality and kindness which I received from my friends in the houses adjacent to the camping-ground and elsewhere.

Perhaps my most entertaining acquaintance here was a hearty old man, a typical forty-niner, who almost daily visited my tent, an article which, much against my will, I had to purchase on the road, owing to the intense coldness of the nights, to sit over the fire of sizzling pine-cones which the branches above and the surrounding forest yielded in plenty. I have a strong suspicion that he put in the time with me to escape the wails of a hypochondriac wife, or the draughty loneliness of his boat-house. At any rate, he always brought a bag of carpenter's tools with him and would make a great show of having much to do in the

said boat-house. But the tools seldom got beyond my tent, where they usually remained for the day. Furthermore, he was a tremendous talker (possibly his wife was to be pitied on this account), an inexhaustible prattler, to be avoided by all who, by ill-fortune, had to live next door to him. He termed himself, with no little pride, "a lecturer," and he lectured me by the hour on every conceivable topic. He had been in the gold rush of '49, had served as soldier fighting Indians in the employ of the British Government at the Caribou mines; he had made "fortunes" and, of course, lost them. As a builder of saw-mills and mining-plant he had worked—heaven knows where he had not been! He had had some illuminating experiences with Mormons who (that was, of course, in his wealthy days) begged him to become a "bishop," for which he would be granted eight wives. "Bless y'r life, it takes me all my time to be civil to one," he had replied! He knew several "millionaires" intimately, and assured me that, would I give them a call on my way North (mentioning his name), they would be delighted to see me and show me the wonders that surrounded their "homes." But his proudest boast was the fact that the climate of Pacific Grove had cured him of Bright's disease, from which he had suffered for years in spite of "a fortune spent on doctors." Whether there was any truth in the statement or not, he certainly had the appearance of a man who had risen from prolonged suffering to that peculiar but sadly ephemeral vivaciousness which is so often the mark of a life renewed.

As a talker he was not like the younger genera-

tions of Westerners, who cease not to expound the details of their own lives with a profound indifference to those of others. This old fellow had a wonderful grasp of affairs beyond his own country, and a memory of the geography of England that put me to shame. Next in order to the story of his resurrection from disease, he delighted to talk of his peculiarities in matters of food. But here, alas, he fell to the mundane level of his compatriots, who are never so delighted as when endeavouring to impress the stranger with statements relating to their individual tastes and appetites. One, for example, will affirm with an air of ostensible self-satisfaction that he always breakfasts off a pound of apples and a jug of buttermilk. Another that he prefers coffee made of burnt barley, or acorns, to the finest mocha. Yet another will tell you that, to cure consumption, he once lived for six months entirely upon fresh, warm blood. The pet theme in this connection upon which my acquaintance at Pacific Grove was never tired of dwelling was salmon's heads, and tea and coffee.

"Yes, sir! when I goes a-fishing and whether I get a good mess, or maybe only one or two, it's only the heads I want" (this with that profound wink that always accompanies astounding statements of this sort). "Su-ure they're the best paht of the fish."

I might have told him that the otters which lived in the brook where I dabbled as a ten-year-old boy had taught me that long ago. But I never had the courage, or indeed the inclination, to dispute any of the customs of which these strange people were so proud of boasting. When

the connoisseur of salmon's heads got on to the subject of tea and coffee, reiterating, with more vehemence than the subject merited: "Yes, sir! If there was a river of tea on this side of me and a river of caw-fee on that, I would not touch a drop of neither of them; no, sir" (with the wink), "not one drop would I taste even if I was on a desert island."

When, I say, he thrust that kind of information upon me with the ramrod of galvanised self-importance, it did no more harm than grieve me a little to think that he might imagine me to be fool enough to be impressed thereby. Thoreau had some of that same exotic spirit of egotism which borders on the grotesque, and sometimes becomes tiresome, but his was leavened with a philosophy which revealed his own shortcomings no less distinctly than it laid bare those of others. Furthermore, Thoreau earned fame, while the others do no more than fondle a visionary toy of parochial notoriety. I can be interested when I read that Izaak Walton and his honest scholar breakfasted off a piece of powdered beef and a radish or two. My palate of humour is tickled when I hear that many an Indian brave preferred his buffalo-beef after it had been well masticated by the jaws of a faithful squaw. It is possible that I might argue the comparative values of Quaker oats versus the "wild" species (not to be confused with the Scottish to-be-soaked-overnight variety). But I care not two pins whether a Native Son takes one lump of sugar in his "cawfee" or sixteen; whether he breakfasts off a pound of apples or a winkle; or whether he smokes hay-seed in preference to tobacco. I cannot bring myself to be impressed

A SIDE-WALK SHOE-SHINE

PRESENT OCCUPANTS OF R. L. S.'S HOUSE

MONTEREY

by these things, and how often have I wished that my wayside acquaintances would not thrust them upon my unwilling ears.

While Monterey lies sheltered upon the lowlands which border the inmost recesses of its magnificent bay, the houses of Pacific Grove are scattered along the higher ground to westward. The coast is rock-bound, beaten by the waves which never cease to roll in from the heavy seas off Point Pinos, and beyond. Looking across the bay are the low hills of Santa Cruz, dim and verdureless above the white line of surf. The little town has pushed its way into the dark forest which covers the Head, and the pretty bungalows, deep in the sheltered clearings of the sombre pines, with their bright geraniums, roses, and nasturtiums, are picturesque, homely, and pleasing features in that rugged country of wood and lonely shore.

There was a time, so the rumour goes, when one David Jacks, a Scot, familiar to readers of Stevenson, came into possession of the greater part of all the land in the vicinity of Monterey, probably through wedding a Spanish heiress. The Head was his property, and he, or his son, Dr. Jacks, reigning as mayor of Monterey when I was there, sold its eight thousand acres to the Pacific Improvement Company for five dollars an acre. The Company, having opened up the Head by cutting extensive roads around it, and by giving Pacific Grove a good start in life by the same means, are now masters of the situation and able to secure a thousand dollars for an acre which a few years ago only cost five dollars. The Seven-

teen-mile Drive, a magnificent road through the pines and cypresses along some of the wildest cliffs of the Western coast, and across white sand-hills and grassy plains swept with the spray of ocean, is one of these. The "Scenic Boulevards" are others, which wind in a maze of curves about the cañons and hill-tops, and which, no matter how the wind and waves rage along the open shore, are everywhere hushed in the warm shelter of fragrant pines.

But why call them "Scenic Boulevards," which suggest footlights, limelight effects, and other dramatic allurements? I suspect that it is the result of that same spirit—a craving for the dazzling and the unreal—which insists upon calling the pines cypresses and the cypresses cedars. Just common, everyday "pines" is not impressive, distinctive enough so that they, with an utter disregard for botany and sense, are called "cypresses." That sounds more "exclusive." Not only are the real cypresses erroneously called cedars, but the "My-country-'tis-of-thee" enthusiast, who claims to have a special interest in these trees, whether he or she be post-card maker or writer of descriptive folder, turns up his, or her, eyes like a duck in a thunderstorm and adds—"of Lebanon"! This kind of stuffing appeals to the palate of the average tourist, and the popular fiction that these cypresses are none other than cedars—of Lebanon, flourishes with unabated zest in folders, West Coast magazines, and picture post-cards.

As a matter of fact, if the patriots of California, and of Monterey in particular, were to adhere to

the plain truth, the latter ought to convince them that these cypresses, being indigenous only to Monterey Head and Point Lobos, are infinitely more attractive and interesting than any distant relationship with any cedars could ever make them. It is the very restriction of its natural range to the extreme seaward fringe of those two headlands, that gives *Cupressus Macrocarpa* its unique distinction among the trees of the earth. The species is as familiar in a cultivated state to Europeans as it is to Americans. The soft velvety green of its close-set foliage when trimmed into ornamental hedgerows or windbreaks, no less than the conical shape of the feathery, spreading branches, tapering from a wide base to a fine point, are well-known features everywhere. But on that rocky coast which is their home, clinging to existence on the very brink of the crumbling cliffs, falling, one by one, as the years pass, into the consuming sea, the parent cypresses bear but little resemblance to their offspring which grow and flourish under kindlier conditions.

Here, where the rocks resound with the eternal breakers, amid the driving spume of mist and rain of spray, the thinned and broken ranks of the last of the cypresses doggedly hold their ground against their inevitable end. Shorn by the incessant wind, nipped by the bite of the salt air, the filmy tips of the spreading boughs cling together in self-protection and, growing inwards, form thick, firm masses of padded green which serve as cushioned buffers against the storm. Doubtless at one time a great forest of these trees lived and flourished on the land that has long ago been

submerged, and the few that remain are but a fringe of the original grove, a mere handful of survivors rallied for the last stand against the resistless invader. Though long and stubborn warfare with wave and wind has gnarled their boughs and padded their scanty foliage, though with elbowed limbs and tattered, ribboned bark they lie in stricken confusion, though the drift of the mist may shudder through the branches, bleached and brittle as steel, these gloomy old cypresses have not that haunted, uncanny suggestiveness of death which pervades the moss-hung oaks. Rather do they recall that classic dignity which one connects with the dark canvas of some old master of landscape, whose trees are not the trees of to-day or yesterday, but symbols of an age long dead.

Never have I seen so savage a sea as that which founders on the rocks of Monterey. Let the day be never so calm, let it be in that early morning hour, long before the "trades" have tuned the first needle of the forest, the insistent thunder of the mighty breakers waxes and wanes with unabated fury. High into the still air, the wreckage of each shattered wave is pitched in broken flakes of sunlit foam. Far into the silent depths of the forest are borne the murmurs of that eternal strife. But when, from out the north-west, there comes that bleak wind which tempers the heat of Pacific Grove's summer day, the ocean is whipped into still fiercer anger. No longer does the rolling voice of each wave rise and fall in a chord of rhythmic grandeur upon the ear. Harmony gives way to chaos, and earth and air and ocean resound with

the deafening confusion of discords, which rise from the wreckage of those stupendous seas upon a coast-line that is pitted and spurred with resounding caverns and the rugged heroes of ages of ocean war.

If my preconceived ideas, which had accorded the Pacific a peaceable disposition, were rudely broken as I went to and from Catalina; if at Santa Barbara and Pizmo those ideas were still further shaken, my acquaintance at Monterey, and after, with the ocean that is "almost always calm," convinced me that the Terrific would be a more becoming name.

One of the most delightful spots on Monterey Head is Pebble Beach, which, protected from the prevailing winds by lofty cliffs to the West, and the dense forest at its back, shelves downwards on a southern slope to the calm waters of Carmel Bay. Though one cannot predict what the future of Pebble Beach may bring (a large tract of the adjacent forest is already pegged-out for the builder, and attractive advertisements of plots for sale are nailed upon the trees), it was, when I saw it, a place of unspeakable calm. The pines, clinging to the white rocks, overshadowed the deep green water in which numbers of cormorants, their wet, bottle-green, slippery bodies shining in the sun, fished with their wonted gluttony within a few yards of shore. Scarce a footfall had left its mark upon the glistening mosaic of the little bay. The boughs and snags of dead cypresses, bleached white like dry bones with the long usage of the sea, had drifted hither into their last quiet anchorage. Only a solitary old Chinaman, who "sat

tight " in a wooden shanty hard by, doggedly refusing to relinquish his leasehold until beckoned by some celestial Gabriel, drew upon that flotsam of ocean for his stock of firewood.

Southward the pines are again driven back by the winds that tear across the wide, gleaming sands of Carmel-by-the-Sea, sweeping the latter into billowy drifts of snowy whiteness, and smiting the dark fringe of the forest with the blight of salt. Sheltered among the trees lie scattered the bungalows of Carmel, said to be the haunt of erudite " thinkers, artists, and littérateurs." Not having the honour of knowing any of these secluded genii, and not being particularly struck by their choice of habitat, for pines and sand are like palms and pavements, one can sometimes get too much of them in California, I only made one visit to Carmel, and that was on my way to the mission which stands on a flat of open ground near the junction of the Carmelo river with the sea. This old mission, already referred to, is yet another which has been disfigured by a hideous modern roof, and had it not been for the special historical and literary interest connected with it, which induced me to visit it, I would probably have been better satisfied with a view of it on the back of a post-card. I observed a goodly number of the original roofing tiles, scalloped and red, doing duty upon a neighbouring hen-house. The few Indians who, in Stevenson's day, still clung to their new faith amid the then gaping ruins of the mission have gone to an equally ignominious end. They have been crushed out, elbowed aside, by an overbearing usurper who now, when it is too late,

would make ostensible effort to repair the evil he has wrought.

The most direct road from Carmel to Monterey, to one who has made the circuit of the Head, as I had done, cuts straight across the neck of the peninsula in a more or less straight line from the Carmelo river to the main street of the old capital. Returning by this route, I turned aside to look at the house in which Stevenson lived during his stay at Monterey. It is a large, adobe-built structure, of forbidding ugliness, standing alone in the centre of a conglomerate assemblage of wooden sheds and cottages, all suffering from want of repair. To approach it from the nearest navigable road, one must cross a little wooden bridge which spans a reedy, unsavoury brook. Before it, on an open space, stands a great sombre cypress tree which, were it possible to get it into the eye of the camera, might have added a touch of dignity to my dismal photograph. Over the door, nailed to the peeling plaster, is a board bearing, in large letters, the strange device, "R. STEVENSON * HOUSE." Entering, I was met by familiar symptoms of renovation. Curls of shavings, scraps of old wall-paper, and bits of fallen plaster littered the floor and the stairs. The planks of the long corridor, which divides the main portion of the upper storey into a double set of rooms, were patched with pieces of recently planed wood, which showed clean and white in contrast with the rest of the time-stained floor. Pitch had been freely used for caulking crevices, as though by a sailor's hand, and, to keep out the damp, which was everywhere in evidence, the walls had

also been daubed with the same material. It was evident that the house had been allowed to succumb to the corruption of time. Now it was shortly to be "fixed up," to be renovated once more and put "under entirely new management" as a lodging-house. The owner of the establishment was an almost pure Spaniard, with a dash of Mexican blood, a middle-aged, handsome man of good physique and a certain comeliness of bearing. He was somewhat reserved in manner, but was glad to show me "Mr. Stevenson's rooms." (Of the four large windows in the gable of the house the two nearest the main building belong to the rooms occupied by R. L. S. See photo.) If he regretted having been too young to remember anything of the great romantic spirit who once had dwelt beneath his roof, he was proud of the fact that his mother had known him intimately.

The climate of Pacific Grove is like that of San Francisco. There is either a pall of sea-mist hanging over it, giving the air a damp chilliness, or the wind drives in from the ocean with discomforting force. Either the one or the other is always present, which explains the comparatively low and equable reading of the thermometer. Here we are once again afforded an example of how false a guide the thermometer alone may be as an indication of climate. Though I can conceive few more delightful changes, for the Californian of the torrid valleys of the interior, than the combination of pines and brisk air which Monterey and its offshoots provide, Pacific Grove was too cold for camping out with comfort when I was there, and that was the end of May.

THE LAST OF THE CYPRESSES

THE OLD CUSTOM HOUSE

WHERE ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON LIVED

MONTEREY

CHAPTER XIII

APPLE ORCHARDS AND REDWOODS

It was with a feeling like unto the regret with which I left Avalon and Santa Barbara, that I saw the last of Monterey. To make matters worse, I found that it was Memorial Day (May 30th), a "legal holiday," which meant that the stores I had counted upon getting could not be secured, for every shop was closed, and there was no hope of obtaining anything until I reached Castroville.

Memorial Day was apparently established as an occasion upon which the populace throughout America should pay their respects to the graves of soldiers fallen in battle. But, as there are comparatively few of such in Western America, it has become a custom, in the absence of martial heroes' tombs, for families to decorate the graves of their relatives instead. Thus, as I drove through Monterey, did I meet people of all ages, nationalities, and creeds, dressed in Sunday best, bearing armsful of flowers to their respective cemeteries. The latter, too, had been done up for the event, the long grass shorn, and gravel paths cleared of weed. There is a certain ostentatious display over the event which one could do without, but that is only what one would expect from a people who delight in sensation, and have a leaning towards the morbid. Notwithstanding, it were

well if some such institution could be inaugurated in the old country, where so many of the rural "God's acres" are the most unsightly, neglected plots of soil in the parish.

For the greater part of the way to Castroville the road over which I plodded was a mere track, deep with sand, and hedged on either side with tall blue and yellow lupins, which brushed against the wheels, and extended in rolling undulations of colour to the horizon on either side. It was heavy going, and most of the day was occupied in covering some fifteen miles. In torrential showers, rain fell at intervals between breaks of hot sunshine. The Memorial Day cannon boomed across Monterey Bay. By evening I had once again crossed the Salinas river, of depressing memory, and called a halt near Castroville, one of the most dismal villages it has ever been my ill-fortune to enter. But for abject dreariness, Castroville was quite endurable compared with Moss Landing, a wilderness of mud, filthy backwaters, middens of rusty cans, and dark, staggering groynes of deserted piers. And this in a country that was all but treeless, swampy, and windswept.

A few miles beyond, however, one enters one of the most flourishing fruit-growing districts in the West, the Pajaro (Paharo) Valley, with the busy, well-to-do town of Watsonville in its centre. I had conversation with many of the ranchers of this prosperous country, and was surprised to find that almost the whole of the fruit trade (apples are the principal crop) is in the hands of "Slavs," or, more properly, Dalmatians. During the last quarter of a century these swarthy aliens have

converted a comparatively valueless country into one great orchard, covering, perhaps, twelve thousand acres. Beginning in a small way, and in small numbers, these Adriatic wanderers have, by sheer force of knowledge, the instinctive knowledge born of generations of fruit-growers, and sharpened by trading for centuries with the wily Turk, gradually secured the whole of the Pajaro trade. If they do not actually possess the orchards, they rent them from their American owners, or, failing that, purchase in advance the prospective crops when the trees are " on the blossom."

" Yes, sir," said a good-natured American rancher to me one hot day near Watsonville, as I gladly accepted his invitation to help myself from his strawberry patch, " you should just see one of these Slavs, maybe, a chap looking as if he wasn't worth the shake of a drake's tail, going through an orchard in blossom ! He'll just pull a blossom, examine it, reckon the number on each spur, run his eye over a branch and over the tree, and I'm darned if he won't figure out to a box or two how many car-loads of apples the lot will make. . . . Speculation ! You bet your life to a doughnut that it's speculation, but I never heard of a Slav go down on the job yet. It's not small figures either. Why, there's scores of them boys who will buy orchards ' on the blossom ' for any sum up to three thousand dollars, and none of them reckon to make less 'an twenty-five to fifty per cent on each deal. What's more, the money's there, don't you forget it. They pay down in hard cash, right there."

So thorough is the knowledge with which these

men are endowed, and such confidence do they possess, that they do not only buy prospective crops "on the blossom" for enormous sums, but contract for succeeding crops, paying, in part, for three, four, or five years in advance. To enable them to do this, they are, of course, not only masters of the art of growing apples, but they have the whole business of marketing at their finger tips. England, I heard, is their best customer, but they have pushed the trade in Pajaro apples all over Europe, and far into the African and Asiatic continents.

It is not surprising that the American who owns an orchard in the Pajaro Valley welcomes the Dalmatian. For, even though the former may work his orchard himself, he knows the latter will turn up just when expected, to pay him a fair price for the crop, whether bought "on the blossom" or later. In either case, he runs but little risk, and has not the trouble of picking, boxing, and shipping. Again, the ranch-owner who leases an orchard to the Dalmatian, leaving it entirely in his care, can sit in his arm-chair at home or travel the world, which he likes much better—small blame to him—assured of a substantial income from his orchard so long as it is in the hands of one of these thrifty, honest strangers. But the American, if he will, can derive more than dollars and security from troublesome work from the Dalmatian. He can learn that secret which lies at the bottom of all successful outdoor work, whether in farm or garden; I mean that patient attention to detail, that spirit of making the most of every square inch of soil, that

ferrety vigilance and unflagging zeal which may be "bunched" under the term "intensive cultivation."

Let me offer the reader one example. The level lands of the Pajaro Valley have long ago been taken up and planted; little remains but rocky hillsides. But, like the Norwegian or the Italian, who, in their respective countries, can convert the ledges of a cliff into a profitable garden, so the Dalmatian tackles the arid, rocky slopes of Pajaro, with that spirit of industry which has possessed his forefathers for centuries on the hills of the Eastern Adriatic. He and his family turn out and set to work upon what would seem an impossible task. They clear away the boulders, often blasting the large rocks, and build them into walls upon the hill-sides. If there is not enough soil they collect it, filling in the backs of those retaining walls with mould carried long distances, in buckets and sacks, from all manner of out-of-the-way places. In this fruit trees are planted. Vines are sometimes put into the interstices of the walls, fig-trees trained over the rocks. Thus the hill, in course of time, becomes a series of terraces. The soil and decaying leaves, collected by the spoonful from among the rocks and trees of greater heights, or the cañon's trough, makes the finest of moulds, and the Dalmatian and his family are soon able to live, and save money, on half an acre, which before would not have kept a Yankee goat alive.

Now there is not the remotest possibility of the American ever adopting that thorough and painstaking method of culture which is character-

istic of the Dalmatian. He has not got it in him to bend his back over details. His notion of agriculture is a thousand-acre field and a forty-mule-team harvester, with himself perched on the top, conducting operations in extemporised but forcible English. The average English farmer is not much better in his own way, but, of late years, a clearer insight and an acquaintance with the *petit culture* of the Frenchman and the Dane, seem to have awakened him to the adoption of more scientific, more exact systems, with the result that he is better off than he has been for a very long time, or could be if he chose. At any rate, I am convinced of this, that the future of agriculture, to use a wide term, in California, would be in a sorry plight but for the alien. Yea, even for the despised Chinaman, and the time is not far distant, when every yard of land in the rich Pajaro Valley will be owned by Dalmatians, who will have forced the American to take a back seat. Already much of the land is in their hands.

The Chinese possess and work practically every one of the fifty-seven apple evaporating furnaces in the district. They also hold the apple canneries and the vinegar factories. I have been assured, on the best authority, that out of these plants are turned every year nearly 2000 tons of evaporated apples, 25,000 cases of canned apples, and close on 15,000 barrels of vinegar. The Chinaman, no less than the Jap, are among the best fruit and vegetable-growers in the world. Yet these thrifty sons of the Orient, even in the Watsonville district, where they have proved themselves so eminently capable, are despised, scorned, and

treated with less tolerance than the American ever bestowed upon the nigger. But so long as the Native Son is thriftless, so long as he thinks he knows everything, so long will he be slowly, but very surely, beaten on his own ground, cast aside in the race for supremacy in these things. In the face of these facts, and, knowing something of the American spirit, is there any cause for wonder that Uncle Sam does all he dare to prevent the Orientals from landing on his shores? And, I may ask in parenthesis, does anyone suppose that the Chinaman would be treated with such houndish derision were China the great power that Japan happens to be? But, for the moment at any rate, perhaps the less said about that subject the better.

From Santa Cruz, which somewhat reminded me of a second-rate Margate in winter, the season not having opened, I began the ascent of a long and hilly road which was to take me over the Southern base of the San Francisco peninsula. Far down on my right, the Lorenzo river flowed through a jungle of willows, hazels, azaleas, and wild raspberry, while above these, clinging to the grey, crumbling rocks, soaring to the summit of the hills which wall that narrow gorge, were the splendid redwoods, or "Big Trees," of Santa Cruz.

But these redwoods of the coast hills, though they deserve the adjective, are not the Big Trees proper of California. The latter (*Sequoia gigantea*) are mainly confined to a small section of the inner mountain ranges, while *Sequoia sempervirens* occupies certain definite areas, of which Santa Cruz is one, of the coast region, which are affected by the sea mists. Both are indigenous only to Cali-

fornia, and they are, among vegetable things, perhaps, the noblest and most venerable on earth. Descendants of a once mighty race, now extinct, that dominated great territories of the Northern hemisphere in the Tertiary period, they are now no more than holding their own in the two belts already referred to. In a few places some fine groves of both species have been saved from destruction by the timely aid of individuals who, by the grace of God, have souls above shingles and dollars, and by a Federal and State Government who, foreseeing the imminent annihilation of the redwood forests, have rescued some sections for posterity.

I cannot enter deeply into the ruthless destruction that has been going on for so long in these timber belts. Private volumes and "Blue Books" have been issued by Americans themselves, relating to the wholesale extinction of these forests by the axe, to the tremendous national loss annually involved by avaricious merchants and adventurers, and to the serious effect of this universal deafforestation upon climate and soil. Nevertheless, it still continues unabated, save in the few restricted areas, and the time is not far off—the present generation will probably live to see it—when the great timber forests of North-Western America (to include the Oregon pine and others), which were the greatest national treasures in the States, will be no more. I do not speak as a sentimentalist. I am not addicted to scaremongering, and I, of course, admit the legality and morality of lumbering. But I do protest (though it may be no business of mine) against the wanton waste of material which that lumbering involves.

CALLAS AND OLIVES

YO SEMITE IN MINIATURE

I protest against the laying bare of extensive tracts of land, against the grab-all and do-nothing policy which pervades every lumbering estate. Against forest fires alone, the woods of the country have a desperate struggle to survive, but when is added to them the overstocking of the ranges with cattle, which destroy the seedling trees, when hundreds of thousands of workmen, who have no respect for the sapling, no thought for the morrow, who "waste *fifty per cent* of all they cut," when this army is kept constantly at work, moving from cañon to cañon, leaving in their wake a forest ruined, a forest that will, in most cases, never recover from such ruthless destruction, it raises one's indignation to wrath. America without her forests would be a thousand times worse off than Britain without her coal supply, yet who cares? The forests fall, the hills grow bare, a wreckage of broken, rotting timber fills the trough of the cañons. The dollar sways the thoughts of the multitude, and of what avail are the little words of a few against such unspeakable madness.

"California," wrote Stevenson with ringing truth, "has been a land of promise in its time, like Palestine; but if the woods continue so swiftly to perish, it may become, like Palestine, a land of desolation." And it is becoming more desolate every day.

If any reader would care to see my statements verified, let him read the plain, hard facts contained in the U.S. (Forest Service) Bureau of Fisheries and Geological Survey; let him read the works of John Muir, the veteran author, who knows more about the mountains and trees of the West than anyone else. Or, he may peruse

a volume entitled *Our Wasteful Nation,* by Mr. R. Cronau (an American), wherein is contained an authentic record of such appalling recklessness, selfishness, excess, carelessness, and brutality, that can be laid to the charge of no other nation. I may have occasion to return to this subject, under another aspect, but, having digressed thus far, must return to the redwoods.

I have stated in an earlier chapter that these noble trees have been subjected, even within the sanctuaries set aside for their protection, to much base usage at the hands of the philistine, and I do not intend to say much more upon so melancholy a subject. There has also been a great deal of nonsense written as to their age and other features, with the intention of arresting the attention of the Californian native or anyone else who is ready to be stuffed with the highly-seasoned sensationalism of the "booster," folder-writer, and pseudo-patriot. It is not enough for these people to learn that the oldest Sequoia is probably not more than two thousand five hundred years old. They must draw upon their imaginations, and add another six or seven thousand years on the top of that. The redwood, the noblest living thing on the American continent to-day, would appear, even at the age of ten centuries, to be capable of much added lustre. Thus we find it stated that it was probably from these groves that the pillars of Solomon's Temple were hewn. But the patriot who exclaims "My country, 'tis of thee" (and spits on it), can do with a lot of that sort of thing. He revels in it, and, with a pin, sticks his visiting-card on the bark of "Theo.

Roosevelt" or "General Grant," and, having uttered a cat-call, so that he may hear the echo of his own voice adown the echoing aisles of the forest, retires well pleased with himself.

I have always had a certain admiration for the "Colonel," for his virility and fearlessness as a critic, and there are few men in official positions who have done more for the preservation of the natural resources of his country than he has done. Hence, I marvel that he should allow his name to be stuck on these venerable trees, and from what I know of General Grant (I take his name at random from a number of others) I feel sure he would never have permitted his name to be used for such an ill-starred purpose. Supposing we emulated the example of the people who are responsible for this kind of vandalism, and painted the name of "Lord Kitchener" on the Great Pyramid, and hung a ticket with the legend "Charles Dickens" round the neck of the Sphinx, what would the world say? Such a state of affairs is inconceivable. But your American evidently does not think so. He must see everything through coloured glasses. Nature's architecture is not good enough for him.

The great beauty of the redwood is the wonderful symmetry of its stem, which, rising, a fluted column from a firm, spreading base, ascends to a height of some three hundred feet, a living symbol of perfect art. The prototype of the Doric pillar, it is the expression of strength, solidity, and permanence, embodied with that elegance and symmetry, with that consciousness of its power, that every work of art must have. There are no

specious rhapsodies of bough or twig (the old trees are very snagged and deficient in foliage), no flamboyant ornament to trick the eye and create a false impression, but, sufficient in itself, conscious of its mightiness, its superb grace and dignity, the redwood is to-day the living spirit of one of the most perfect art forms the world has ever seen.

The ground beneath the redwoods is, in those few areas where the trees have been saved from fire and axe, deep with the soft brown leaves of centuries. The footfalls of the summer crowds are hushed (would that their voices were !). The light is dim, even in midsummer, but in morning or evening the low sun shines through the mullioned windows of the forest, piercing the gloom with shafts of silver. Save human voices, no sound ever breaks the cloistered hush of those venerable shades. To be there alone gave me that sensation of haunting loneliness which comes to one when he finds himself the only living being among the tombs of some great cathedral. Many a time have I gone into the dim quietude of a redwood grove, full of the determination to try and better understand their classic beauty ; but as often have I retreated with my imagination stirred, but only half-satisfied. Like the birds and the squirrels, the grass and the flowers, I ever sought the light and the sunshine and closer companionship of the more sympathetic outside world.

And often, too, would the words of Walt Whitman, in " The Song of the Redwood-Tree," come back to me with a strange pathos, as I went my way through those miles of stricken forest, where the tall stumps of woodland giants, charred by

fire or gnawed by the axe, stand like monuments to the fallen dead :

A chorus of dryads, fading, departing, or hamadryads departing.
A murmuring, fateful, giant voice, out of the earth and the sky,
Voice of a mighty dying tree in the redwood forest dense.

Farewell, my brethren,
Farewell, O earth and sky; farewell, ye neighbouring waters,
My time has ended, my term has come.

But, e'en though the bravest and the best have fallen, there is a possibility that the Sequoia woods may, in course of time, recover some of their lost splendour, provided, of course, the sapling is spared by the lumberer and saved from the fire. Both species are fairly prolific in their respective areas. The old trees are protected against fire by a bark of enormous thickness (six inches to two feet), and the lower part of their columns is usually free of branches. Furthermore, they are devoid of the highly inflammable resinous ducts of the pines, and, being allied to the yew, they will send up a "second growth" of robust poles from the base of a stump, whether the parent has been killed by the axe or scorched by fire. Thus a redwood forest will, in some measure, restore itself, if allowed to do so, by this vigorous "second growth," while a pine wood never will. In this there is hope, and a people, even supposing we consider the redwood from a commercial standpoint only, who do not lend every possible aid to this recuperative process, deserve the unqualified denunciation of every nation under heaven.

CHAPTER XIV

THE VALLEY OF SANTA CLARA

HAVING stayed two days at Big Trees, I continued my up-hill way for some miles, and at Boulder Creek, a little place with the " lid on," or, in other words, under the ban of prohibition, turned in an easterly direction by a narrow, dusty road which plunged into the depths of Bear Creek Cañon. Here, again, with the rare delights of a trout stream, deep in the cool shade of moss-clad rocks, tender fern, and overhanging trees, did the time go pleasantly indeed. The ranchers, farming little clearings in the surrounding forest, were as hospitable as ever. One of them in particular do I recall, not only because he was kind enough to offer me a grass run for my old mare, declining to take any recompense whatsoever, but because he had a wife who actually did " wear the breeches " while at her daily avocations about the house and ranch. To be precise, they were not breeches (or trousers) proper at all, but the ordinary blue cotton overalls, at a dollar the pair, which almost every male workman of the West uses instead of the more expensive article. I had often seen little girls in these bifurcated garments, but here was a comely matron, still on the bright side of forty, who, with " Boss of the Road " (the maker's trade-mark) on a label at the small of her back,

carried out her domestic duties unhampered by any vestige of skirt. Though, to my eye, the trousers might have been more comfortable had they been made a little wider, she went about her work unashamed. Indeed, she might have been born in them so little did the absence of a skirt, even in the presence of a stranger, affect her nonchalant demeanour.

She had a brother-in-law—her husband's partner on the ranch—a dilapidated little man, with shaggy red hair, a red tie knotted round a lean, ropy neck, a suit of ancient clothes that had obviously been made for a man of double his stature, and a deep, husky voice, also big enough for a more imposing owner. In curious contrast to the general effect, his fingers were bedecked with immense rings of opulent design. But, even though they were seen in the illusive flicker of my evening fire, or in the moonbeam's kindly lustre, it was obvious they had never come out of Tiffany's. He appeared to be on better terms with " Boss of the Road " than her husband was, but it was manifest that she held both of them in subjection. He was a great card in his own lights, and regaled me with many husky-voiced yarns of his encounters with rattlesnakes, his exploits in the field of sport, and the usual reel of self-glorifying experiences, of which the Westerner has an inexhaustive store.

It was during one of these one-sided evening talks that a curious thing happened. It was moonlight, and, but for the ripple of the stream and my friend's deep, chesty voice, no sound stirred the forest. He had just concluded a tale

of an affray he had had with footpads, in which he was, of course, the heroic victor. He had tramped the forests at all hours of night and day, and feared nothing . . . but, suddenly, there was a slight sound as of a breaking twig behind us. Looking round, we both saw what appeared to be the figure of a person standing in the open moonlight just beyond the shadow of the trees above us. I felt a trembling hand clutch my knee. My companion's face was distraught with fear. The thing seemed to move, as objects in moonlight appear to do when steadfastly looked at. But I do not think a full minute had elapsed, since we first heard the sound when, with a nervous ejaculation and a frantic leap, the man by my side had leapt behind the nearest tree, drawn a revolver, and fired two shots in rapid succession at the object. At the same moment I recognised the thing as a charred stump! Of course, the gallant sportsman, amid much repressed confusion, justified his action more to his own satisfaction than to mine, and soon retired. I merely mention the incident to show how easily these people, who are seldom without an arsenal in their hip-pocket, are moved to the use of fire-arms. They "let go" at anything on the slightest provocation, and, though my acquaintance of Bear Creek (he had lately been a deputy forest warden) was probably rather more nervous than most, the regular carrying of fire-arms by men and boys leads to an appalling number of accidents every year, and to a foolish carelessness in the handling of fire-arms which no decent sportsman could for a moment endure.

At the summit of the pass, which leads from

Bear Creek in the direction of Santa Clara Valley, I halted at a little wayside house dignified by the name, "Hotel Heidelberg." In the porch, screened from the hot sun, sat an amply proportioned old German *frau* and three men, her sons, the latter with mugs of beer at hand. None of them had much English, and what energy they might ever have possessed had succumbed to the drowsiness of the afternoon. Asking for some beer, which is about the safest drink, other than wine, one can take in California, especially in a house kept by Germans, and presenting my wine-skin to be filled with the product of the home winery, a dilatory discussion took place in German as to who should serve me. The mother asked the sons in rotation, they nudged each other, and finally persuaded her to move. They much preferred to sit in the shady verandah, discuss my rig and equipment, ask questions about this place or that, and argue among themselves as to the best travelling route to San José (San Hosay). However, I at length secured the wine (two quarts for fifteen cents!), which proved to be atrociously new and rebellious, a striking contrast to the excellent "Gambrinus," and went my way down a rough, winding road to Los Gatos.

Except to the fruit-grower, there is little to interest the passer-by in Santa Clara Valley. There are monotonous miles of straight roads, cutting the orchards of prunes, apricots, and other stone-fruits into geometrically exact sections. At long intervals one comes across an electric car line, which links together the various towns with San José, while trim houses with their bright gardens

help to break the dullness of a world that would otherwise appear to consist of naught but rows of trees set out with mathematical accuracy.

There is much said of the wonderful grow-rich-quick possibilities that await the fruit-grower in the Santa Clara Valley, more, perhaps, than is spoken or written of any other part of California, which is saying a very great deal! But from what I could see as I passed along the road, and from what I subsequently heard, the famous valley is not by any means the gold-mine which some would have it to be. Staying one night near a little town called Mountain View, a fruit-grower told me that he had for a long while been trying to sell out. "The Santa Clara Valley is right enough for a rich man to live in," he told me, "but it's no place for them who wants to live by fruit-growing. Why, the whole place is infested with thrips and other pests. It started 'way back on th' south side, where I was located at first, and gradually it's spread this far. I've moved three times in five years to try and get a clean crop, but I reckon it's no darned use movin' n' more. . . . Yes, sir, for seven years there's not been a crop worth the gatherin'."

"Yet," I responded, "you ask four hundred to one thousand dollars per acre for stocked orchards, knowing them to be practically valueless."

He laughed, adding, "That's just how it is. These Eastern 'suckers' come out here who don't know nothin', 'specially when the bloom is on, and the railroads runs trips, and the towns get up blossom tournaments and divil knows what, to

boost the valley, an' now and again one of us drops on one of these chaps, and bet y'r life, he don't see us no more, once we've got his brass."

But one soon gets accustomed to these incidents of roguery in California. Any question of honour is flouted. If you are fool enough to get your "eyes skinned," you must bear the brunt of it and look as pleasant as you can. Next time you will know better. "Yes, s'r, that's all there is to it."

From San José I could see the Lick Observatory, on the summit of Mt. Hamilton, high above the clouds, a shower from which latter had laid the dust and cooled the sultry air. Had time allowed I would have made the journey to the famous telescope, but a brief stay at San José was as much as could be spared. The distant view of what appeared to be a white dome recalled a lecture of Sir Robert Ball's which I had heard him deliver in the North of England nearly twenty years before. He was referring to this telescope, and said that he had been asked to suggest a suitable epitaph with which the tomb of Mr. Lick, who was buried beneath his great telescope on the mountain top, might be inscribed. Whether he did so or not I do not know, but he told his audience that, "Creation *licked* at last!" appeared to him to be the most appropriate.

Before leaving San José I went into an hotel, again to purchase some wine. Having done so, the bar-tender, after handing me my change, stuck a long iron instrument like a toasting-fork into an urn that was standing over a gas-jet and fished out a fat, steaming sausage, called, I think, in the native tongue, "a weenie." This he pre-

sented to me, still impaled at the end of the spike! I cannot imagine whether he thought I ought to take it in my teeth and devour it on the mat, or convey the burning, greasy object away between my fingers, or put it in my pocket. However, I assured him I was not hungry, and would like to have added that, even if I were, a hot, greasy sausage at the tip of a long iron spike was about the last thing a hot and dusty traveller would care to wrestle with. He probably satisfied himself that I was "just a bloomin' Englishman," and there the matter ended.

I suppose, when at Palo Alto, I ought to have done what everybody else does, gone to look over the Leland Stanford "thirty million dollar (£6,000,000) University." But it did not draw me, not even did the fact that it was all built in the "Mission style" (of which, in its modern form, I had by that time had more than enough) lure me aside. I know not precisely what it is that causes me to metaphorically turn my coat collar up and pass by on the other side, when some ostensible wonder, whose value is only estimated in dollars, let it be a millionaire's baby or a university, would be thrust upon me by the ubiquitous "booster." But I do so, not without some satisfaction in having made an escape, and am prepared to be called a stoic, bloomin' Englishman, or anything else for my pains.

By one authority, probably Baedeker, I am reminded that Mr. Stanford bequeathed this "thirty million dollar university" to the State in memory of his dead son. The popular opinion is that he gave it to make his peace with the

powers of outer darkness for having first taken that thirty million, and many other unrecorded millions, from the people of the West as a railway magnate. Was not Mr. Stanford also a great patron of that thing accursed in America, the turf? I hope the former statement is the most authentic, for the old gentleman's sake.

Readers who need not be reminded of the Westerner's delight in phonetic spelling and pronunciation (he pronounces deaf, *deef*, and spells through, *thru*) will be surprised to learn that he makes a marked exception of Spanish words. Thus, he does not pronounce Jolan, San José, San Joaquin, or Vallejo as spelt, but in accordance with the language to which they belong, the above examples becoming Holon, San Hosay, San Wahkin, and Valayo. Yet the Native Son deems it a tremendous joke if he can find a stranger who is ignorant enough to pronounce these names phonetically.

I have often wondered why the Californian should make this distinction, why he should preserve the ancient and specific peculiarities of one language and ignore those of another, his adopted tongue, for example. He does not pronounce Detroit with any respect for the French language, yet he calls a railway station a dee-po (dépôt). He spells theatre, theater, presumably because he would otherwise have to pronounce it thee-a-tree, yet he calls a pot a paht, and a . . . But I make no quarrel with him over these inconsistencies. For my part, he is at liberty to make any hash he pleases out of the English language, or any other. But I resent that contemptuous laugh of his

when anyone happens to mispronounce one of his Spanish names, because the attitude of superiority which is at the same time assumed (by one who himself makes a boast of misspelling and mispronunciation) is itself so ridiculously inconsistent. The explanation of the Native Son's tenacious adherence to what remnants of Spanish history may still exist in California would appear to be this: He is rather proud of the fact that his State has had a past (a thing of which he himself can seldom boast), that the State was once, in part, controlled by a great European power, which, even though it was then in its decline, left behind it a certain flavour of opulence and pageantry. The Native Son is not a little proud of this relic of ancient history which lends a lustre to a State and civilisation that might otherwise suffer from some obscurity. He clings to these old Spanish names, as a village snob clings to the memory of a distant relation who was once honoured by the order of knighthood. To preserve his assumed connection with the older civilisation, the Native Son is ready to sacrifice his pet theories regarding phonetic spelling and pronunciation. He puts himself out of his way to perpetuate the memory of the fact that this once greater nation at one time had occupied his country. Not an inestimable object, the reader may contend. By no means, provided the Native Son, in carrying it out, is not so incongruous as to be ridiculous, not so speciously demonstrative, in this peculiar form of snobbery, as to be grotesque.

All the way from San José to San Francisco (about fifty miles) there is a first-rate road, well

macadamed and constantly sprinkled. There are some fine houses, the residence of the " idle rich " of 'Frisco, at intervals for the greater part of the way, and, at the time of my visit, the famous rose gardens of Alameda, Belmont, San Mateo, and other places, were just approaching perfection. Despite a drenching rain which fell during the first half of the route, and a bitterly cold wind that faced me throughout the second half (both of which, I was assured, were " most unusual " and entirely due to " the earthquake "), those " homes " and wonderful gardens have left with me an impression of comfort and luxuriance, intensified, perhaps, by contrast with the barren ugliness of the country that surrounds them. Nor were their exteriors altogether wanting in taste, which is seldom the companion of American opulence.

For long distances this fine road was lined on both sides by magnificent eucalyptus trees (both the blue and red species), and the more one sees of this tree, the more one wonders why the Southern Californian does not make more use of it than he does. His native woods are doomed to perish in a very short time, while the eucalyptus is eminently adapted both for the climate and many of the various objects for which timber is so largely used in the West. A blue gum, as it is called, may be cut down, and in twelve months it will have sent up poles twenty feet in length, and that in a dry, poor soil. The wood burns well as fuel, and is extremely durable. The aromatic fragrance given off by the leaves is healthful and invigorating, especially in hot summer weather,

and few trees are more beautiful to look upon. Yet with all these qualifications, and a host of others, the Californian is short-sighted, selfish enough to be content for the day and let posterity blaspheme his bones for having left his duty undone. It is not that he does not realise the fact that he ought to plant, but he prefers to try and make others do so. Too much praise cannot be awarded to those who, whether moved by personal motives or otherwise, are really bestirring themselves on behalf of the eucalyptus. But the matter is one for the State or Southern counties, and there are tens of thousands of bald acres to-day, only waiting for someone who is large-hearted enough to look a few years ahead and cover their nakedness with this profitable and beautiful timber.

MT. TAMALPAIS

EUCALYPTUS AVENUE NEAR SAN MATEO

CHAPTER XV

SAN FRANCISCO

On the Southern outskirts of San Francisco there is the usual maze of electric car-lines common to the environs of all American towns. Here they appear to do a thriving business in carrying people, both the quick and the dead, out to the numerous cemeteries, in its pride of which the Western metropolis is not a little ostentatious.

It was some time before I could get any satisfactory explanation as to why cemeteries, often empty enough, are so numerous about these larger Californian towns. They appeared to be out of all proportion to the population of the districts in which they are situated. But, eventually, I discovered that they are run as money-making concerns, as estates, by the real estate fraternity. Smith, for example, will buy a plot of land, lay it out with gravel paths and shrubs, give it an imposing entrance-gate, and invite custom. By the said gate he will stick up a large notice relative to the great advantages to be derived from buying your six-feet in advance, for the claimants for his plots are so great that the land-value increases every hour. He calls his estate " The Evergreen Cemetery," a nice, encouraging name. Then there is his rival, Brown, over the way, who endeavours to " best " poor Smith by offering his plots on the

easy purchase system, by giving a reduction for a quantity (for members of the same family) and by other accommodating inducements. These rivals, and half-a-dozen others, compete with one another for the possession of your mortal remains. They advertise the attractive features of their respective cemeteries along with the "popular amusements" in the daily press, drawing attention to the special advantages of a "southern slope," or the delights of a grave "facing the sea." One proprietor will insist that he caters only for the "exclusive" members of the community, the cunning fox knowing full well that if a customer has failed during his lifetime to attain that rank, insurance money and the help of aspiring relations may buy him a "Society" burial when he is dead. Another, with a tolerance and humanity that would have melted the heart of Mrs. Beecher Stowe, offers special terms for niggers, pet dogs, Chinamen, and faithful parrots. All of which would be rather distressing in any other country but America.

To obtain the best impression of San Francisco, one should approach the city by ferry from the Oakland or Sausalito side. I had no choice other than that of entering, so to speak, by the back door, and the back door of a Western city is like the rear premises of many of the "homes," an unsavoury midden of kitchen garbage, heaps of old meat and milk-tins, coal-oil cans, dilapidated buggies, draggle-tailed fowls ("too humanised, methinks, to roast well," as Thoreau suggests) and superannuated beds.

I know not how many miles I travelled, after

passing the cemeteries, before I struck Market Street, but I do know that the wind was bitterly cold, that sand and dust filled the air, and that, save for a distant view of the "citied hills," and the roofs of the houses which form the main part of the town, all around was a bleak, windswept, colourless land, sparsely dotted with numbers of untidy, comfortless-looking wooden houses, set down anyhow and anywhere. But, my brave old steed comfortably stabled, the blessed delights of a not too luxurious hotel to the cold and wind-beaten, dust-choked wayfarer, soon dispelled, for the time being at any rate, all feelings of hostility towards the climate.

When I first walked the streets of Los Angeles I carried, after the manner of most Englishmen, a walking-stick. But I soon became conscious of the fact that the Native Son not only turned round to stare at me and my exceedingly humble bit of cherry wood, but that he was inclined to look upon the habit with ridicule. Furthermore, the small boys looked defiant as I approached, and the stray dogs, with a discretion which would have been commendable had there been any necessity for it, crossed the street, and surveyed me and my innocent weapon from the safety of the other side. But, with the proverbial stoicism of my race, I stuck to my old friend, and scorned the contumelious attentions of the natives of both species, being satisfied, of course, that they were insular in views and rather rude in manners.

In San Francisco it was different. I had no walking-stick, for the camper must reduce his equipment to the last ounce, but was conscious

of the fact that my appearance, in spite of the gallant efforts of a razor, a hot bath, a clothes brush, and other ministrants, was one which suggests extreme poverty. I was pitied. There was no getting away from the fact, for it was written in almost every eye, I was an object of pity. Sumptuously arrayed ladies, with low-cut bodices, yet bolstered in furs, looked upon me with eyes that verily melted with compassion, as I stood under the glare of electric light, with the best of dinners inside me and the worst of winds whistling without. A few brushed past me with a scorn that I had always understood did not exist in democratic America. But most of the dear creatures looked at my dilapidated, but very useful, hat, at my apologetic feet that seemed to shrink for very shame into the nether folds of my grey flannel trousers, with that compassion which is the lot of the poor. Had I extended, with trembling hand, my dear old hat, into it, I doubt not, would have fallen a shower of dimes. But at the moment I liked their tender glances of sympathy better than their money. When I went into a place of amusement, I was conscious of being eyed with suspicion. When I asked a policeman for Messrs. Thomas Cook and Sons' office, he must have mistaken my meaning, for he directed me to a disreputably low cook-shop, where " Clean beds at 15 cents a night " and " Pie and coffee, 5 cents," were advertised on the steaming window-panes. When I bought some packets of camera films, the man behind the counter kept the parcel well within his reach until I had handed him the price. Another man, who

sat behind the toothpicks and took the money at a restaurant, refused to change a Banker's Association Traveller's cheque. He would not even handle or look at the thing, so complete was his distrust of me. These, and many other indignities, did I suffer with the best possible grace.

Before I set forth to walk the pavements and get some dinner, I was, as I have said, in a measure prepared to be an object of some attention of a none too flattering nature, not that I was unaware of the fact that a dollar or two would have converted me into a quite ordinary, insignificant member of humanity. But I was properly equipped for the road, had but a brief time to stay in San Francisco, and would not have avoided such an experience for a good deal. If ever I have a desire to go in for the time-honoured profession of begging, I shall make my débût in the metropolis of the West.

Though nearly all traces of the great fire and earthquake of 1906, save a few blackened spaces hidden by hoardings of advertisements, have long ago disappeared, and San Francisco stands to-day a finer town than ever it was before, people still talk of the event as though it happened yesterday. Many do not hesitate to put down every evil thing that exists in the city and surrounding country, from the lethargic state of the real estate and building trade to the weather, which latter is best described as "mean," to the influence of "the quake." The more pessimistic go a step farther, and contend that, one of these days, a tidal wave, or some such terror, will sweep across the narrow neck of the peninsula upon which the city stands,

that the sky-scrapers will topple over into the bay, and San Francisco will be no more.

But such prophecies as these, nor even the severe shaking the city received in 1911, are enough to quench the ardour of American enterprise, which, no matter what may be offered in argument against it, must be given due credit for that indomitable pluck, that dogged perseverance against stupendous difficulties, and that infinite trust in the future which have helped, not only to raise San Francisco in two years from a city of ashes, but to conquer and achieve scores of other tasks of equal magnitude. When Chicago was burnt down in '71 two hundred people lost their lives, and the damage done was estimated at forty million pounds. At San Francisco, over four hundred people perished, and the loss was estimated at seventy million pounds. Yet in both places the work of reconstruction was taken up at once, and in a very few years modern cities of stone, or concrete and steel, stood upon the sites where wooden buildings, inflammable as tinder, had prevailed. We cannot speak with levity of an enterprise and vigour that can bring such rapid transformations to pass. And now that I am on the subject, I would beg the reader's consideration, while I dwell a moment upon the much-discussed sky-scraper.

It has often been urged that America is a country without art, as we, in a general way, understand the term in Europe. I believe I have made the same remark in an earlier chapter, and may do so again. But in modern architecture, to which I here refer, America has earned a distinction in the sky-

scraper. It is her speciality in building construction, her own particular contribution to the art of building. Now, I am not disposed to argue or insist upon the claims or merits of the sky-scraper as " a work of art," but I would contend that this much maligned object is, in its own sphere, as symbolic of the spirit of its own age as the Gothic spire is symbolic of the infinite ascension of religious aspiration. Its fundamental principle is usefulness, its fabric of cast-iron or steel, sheathed or screened with concrete or brick, takes the form of a column, with its base, shaft, and capital. It has no flamboyant ornament to speak of, no avoidable fantasies, no decorative trickery to mislead the eye ; in a word, no useless and offending features that are in any way conspicuous. It is an honest structure that, in spite of ominous predictions, continues to rise in height, rejoicing in its strength, solidity, and practical sufficiency. If in the Gothic arch the spirit of the builders soars to the sublimity of spirituality, the sky-scraper, so lean and plain and white, so essentially useful, so strong to breast the four winds or resist the earthquake, and the fire; every inch of its construction lending its aid to the busy workaday life of the busiest of nations, expresses, with no less force, the spirit of the material, temporal life. It may, however, be contended that art is beautiful and that which is not beautiful is not art. But it would nevertheless be as false to assert that beautiful things are always artistic, as it would be to argue that objects of art are always beautiful. To my mind, some of the lofty buildings of San Francisco, which must be seen from the water (a " worm's-

eye view" from the street will not do), and the stupendous erections on Manhattan Island, viewed as one enters the Narrows, are as likely to stir the imagination, as the crushing ponderosity of the Egyptian form. The former expresses the spirit and the activities of the people responsible for their erection as eloquently as the latter symbolises the oppressive atmosphere of Egyptian life. To quibble against the use of the cast-iron ornament in the sky-scraper is an indication of weakness in the arguments of those who dislike the buildings. The latter does not lend itself to such work, any more than a column does, and it is no more in evidence on most sky-scrapers than it is on a factory chimney. It is often quite indiscernible.

Yet, to fully understand the point of view here expressed, to grasp my argument properly, one must know something, not only of the American people, but of the topography of their country. To the gaunt nakedness of her mountains, her thin, rarefied air, her treeless plains and raw hills, with their spires of towering pines, no other form of architecture is so fitted as the sky-scraper. The best, most inspiring art, as that of the Greeks, is rare anywhere to-day. A confusion of demoralised art forms is everywhere in evidence. Whether the sky-scraper is an adoption of earlier principles, modified for modern use, or whether it is an entirely new departure, I do not propose to discuss, but I am confident of this, that the sky-scraper has more of that power over the imagination—always a good test of art—than one of those depressing rows of suburban villas in England can ever have. An unhappy comparison, you may say. It may be,

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SAN FRANCISCO : MARKET STREET

but it is often the very people who live in or build such villas, not only in England, but elsewhere, who are the first to decry the sky-scraper. The latter is more to me than that fearsome, vulgar thing, the Liberty Statue, better art than nine-tenths of the graven images with which we, and other nations, commemorate our heroic dead. The pine-log shack that once stood on Manhattan Island was as pure an art form as one could desire. It fulfilled its purpose, as a symbol of its age, and passed away. In its own way, its lofty successor is no less truthfully expressive of the age it represents.

Perhaps it was for reasons which the foregoing remarks suggest, that my short time at San Francisco was spent in the heart of the city. Having just come in from a long sojourn in the open country, great parks had less attraction for me than the pavements. I certainly had no more ambition to see the statue of the author of that popular ballad, "The Star-Spangled Banner," placed in company with a memorial to Schiller and Goethe, than I had to see the caged buffaloes. Of missions, seal rocks, and the "homes" of the dollared great, I had had more than enough. Hence, instead of making pilgrimages to these things, I laid by a mixed memory of San Francisco's playhouses, her chop sueys and Spanish *tamales*, the latter a distant connection of the Scottish haggis, boiled in a curious thatch of straw, redolent of the peppery and sunny south. Wafts of incense from the dim, mysterious joss-houses of pig-tailed John, were not an unpleasant change from the cleaner fragrances of the road.

The ornate restaurants, with their sumptuous menus, were a delightful intercession in the common level of my camping fare. From every third door along the side-walks issued the inspiring strains of " Silver Bell " (this time rendered by bandoliered swain with spectacular effects), and more than one gramophone assured me that " Kelly " had not yet been found. This, explain it how you will, afforded me a passing glow of comfort, and I inwardly hoped they never would find him. To eat, drink, and be merry under the tender eye of compassion was, in itself, alone worth visiting San Francisco for.

It has often been remarked that the destruction of San Francisco was the greatest blessing that ever befell the city ; that no Sodom or Gomorrah ever more deserved the brimstone and fire and earthquake than this one did, so great was its iniquity. If that be so, then, to judge from my brief experience, it must have been very wicked indeed, or I have lost all sense of proportion in my estimation of morality. I do not know, save by hearsay, what the moral state of San Francisco's heterogeneous population amounted to before 1906. But if it was so much worse than it is to-day that nothing short of fire and brimstone would cleanse it, then the devil himself, satiated by his own debauchery, must have blushed for shame. It is easy to find corruption anywhere, if we " rake in the sink of vices " to find it ; but San Francisco does not cloak her evil doings. There is some virtue in that. Even the casual visitor will not long have been within her gates before being confronted with those salient, ostensible features

of the "under-world," for which the most hardened old sinner never quite loses his zest. San Francisco makes no pretence of being good, whatever Los Angeles may do. On the contrary, she throws herself, body and soul, into revelry and dissipation. Instead of issuing special police regulations, when such excuses for abandonment to pleasure as Independence Day or New Year's Eve draw nigh, her best hotels fold up their carpets, put away their tapestries, and sprinkle their floors with sawdust!

But, rather than enlarge upon my own views of the matter, let me quote a paragraph or two which were printed (in bold type) in the *San Francisco Bulletin*, for July 29th, 1911. They call for no interpretation.

"WHEN A COMMUNITY LEADS A LIFE OF JOY AND CRIME.

"It is hardly fair to blame Mayor McCarthy for the demoralised condition of the Police Department, and the lawless condition of the town. He promised before his election to make San Francisco the 'Paris of America' (Poor Paris!) and to give the people an administration 'along liberal lines,' and he is merely keeping his promise to the people who elected him.

"For a while, under the pressure of public opinion, which revolted temporarily when Gustav Postler, after being plucked of his money, was killed by the proprietor of a gambling hell, with a revolver which a police sergeant kindly loaned him for the occasion, the gamblers were suppressed; but the excitement died out quickly, and the hells are

now flung wide open. Persons with a taste for playing crooked games of chance can lose their money with ease and rapidity in fifty or more establishments. The Chinese "fantan" clubs, which, having corrupted the Police Department for half a century, were recently closed, are now running full blast. The "tenderloin" is again hilarious, and the Barbary Coast is as lively as a new mining camp. The newspapers tell where these places are. Anybody can find them except the Chief of Police, who blandly says that his devoted captains tell him there is no gambling, no music after hours, and no wide-open town.

"While the gamblers are having their fling, the men who eat the bread of infamy and take the wages of shame are also enjoying the advantages of an administration 'along liberal lines.' Jerome Bassity, their Captain-General, is the actual head of the Police Department; he dispenses protection to those whom he marks for favour, and men on the police force rise and fall by his nod. Every few days some young girl disappears. The business of procuring recruits for the brothels is flourishing under the genial atmosphere of this 'Paris of America.' Burglars, footpads, 'bunko-men,' pursue their trades without fear. In short, the city is living the life of joy. . . . The Paris of America must have young men to fling their money away. It must have school-girls to feed its insatiable tenderloin. . . . Unfortunately, an administration 'along liberal lines' hurts business in the long run. A community, like an individual, cannot live riotously without becoming poorer. Two years of the life of joy under Mayor McCarthy

and Bassity, have cost the community a good deal in money and reputation. We are counting on the Panama-Pacific Exposition to make times better; but the success of that exposition will depend on the confidence and co-operation of the rest of the world. Perhaps we had better get rid of McCarthy and Bassity, and put our house in order."

I have quoted the above at some length, not as a text to a lecture on the morality of San Francisco in particular, but to give readers unacquainted with the West, some insight into the condition of affairs existing in the larger Pacific coast towns generally. I know nothing of the officials accused, but this much I do know, you can seldom pick up a paper or magazine in any of the Western cities without being confronted with a similar tale of debauchery, corruption, bribery, and all manner of iniquity, told in the above style of journalese. To-day San Francisco may be depicted as a " wide-open town," a stew of pollution. To-morrow it may be subjected to a " wave," sudden and sensational, of cast-iron, tyrannical, arbitrary description. Every official, from the mayor to the scavenger, will be wiped out of office, and the city will, for a time, appear to go comfortably to sleep.

But " the evil that men do lives after them." You cannot extinguish debauchery and corruption as you would snuff out a candle. Like a cancer that, checked in one part of the body, only breaks out afresh somewhere else, so the evil-doers merely go elsewhere. In the next State, or even the neighbouring town, they find another jurisdiction

which is more tolerant ; it is kindlier soil, and there they soon become established. At one place or another they will settle and prosper exceedingly, whether they be " white slavers," " bunkomen," or mere ne'er-do-wells, until one day the " white-wash brush " is dipped in the lime, and once again they must flee from the scourging " wave " to pastures new. San Francisco is possibly, taking an average year, no more immoral than Los Angeles or San Diego. The world-wide but unenviable notoriety which Seattle earned for itself a few years ago may any day be enjoyed by Portland, or Sacramento. It depends upon that erratic " wave," that frothy, emotional impulse which suddenly discovers a harvest of crime in one place, only to shoulder it on to another. Of course, the hopelessness of maintaining anything like law and order while the jurisdiction of adjoining States, counties, and municipalities is respectively different, is obvious. But, even supposing there to be a universal law relating to gambling, prohibition, white slavery, and other prevailing evils of that class, does any sane man believe it would ever be sustained and carried out in all places with equal vigilance, precision, and justice ? Where the corruption of officials by bribery is still such a universal practice, and where the law either slumbers, or boils over in a bubble of emotionalism, it is impossible.

At the moment of writing the " wave " appears to flourish with puritanical zest at Los Angeles, and the following extract from a Western newspaper will afford the reader a view of the " white-wash brush " rampant.

" NEW YEAR'S EVE ' LID ' PUT ON LOS ANGELES.

" Los Angeles, Dec. 28.—Los Angelans who wish to celebrate the coming of young 1912 amid wine, revelry, laughter, and song, will have to go to live in old San Francisco to do it. Joy-tightening orders were sent to members of the police force to-day by Police-Chief Sebastian. They read something like this :

" All saloons must remain closed on New Year's Eve.

" Restaurants must cease selling liquor promptly at midnight.

" No riot of mirth will be tolerated.

" No singing on the streets will be allowed.

" Put all confetti throwers in jail.

" But everybody may have a good time."

The irony of the last line is stinging.

Does anyone, I ask again, who understands the rudiments of human nature, really believe that such frenzied legislation, such erratic temper on the part of those who are elected to scour the haunts of wickedness, will ever achieve the desired end ? The despised Chinese coolie, grubbing with bended shoulders in pursuit of the weeds that threaten to overwhelm his cabbage-patch, knows better than that. Let him emulate the example of they who presume to be his betters, by allowing the hoe to rust, and polishing it up only when a " wave " of energy moves him, and he will find that his cabbages have been choked by tares while he slept. He may rescue them, but they will never be quite the same as once they were. But,

as I have said, he knows better than to risk any such disaster. He knows that it is only by honest effort, sustained energy, and level-headed, dogged vigilance that he can keep the enemy within his power, and prevent chaos from overwhelming him and his. But Western legislation in the pursuit of crime has got to go a very long way indeed before those qualities which the coolie exercises can be ascribed to it. Meanwhile, the white slaver, most damnably brutal of all criminals, enjoys the sorry earnings of his wretched victims and, incidentally, the press laps up the scum which rises to the surface of the daily gossip.

EVENING ON CLEAR LAKE

SPINELESS CACTUS AT MR. LUTHER BURBANK'S

CHAPTER XVI

IN LAKE COUNTY

THOUGH San Francisco Bay is an harbour of such magnitude its shores are, for the most part, tame and disappointing. The only striking features about it are the rugged hills upon which the city stands on the one side, the bald cone ofTamalpais on the other, and Golden Gate, an impressive ocean gateway, only one mile in width, and walled by lofty cliffs. It was through that grey chasm that blew one of the coldest winds that ever I felt, as the ferry boat slowly (O, so slowly !) wandered across the water to Sausalito. It was San Francisco's parting shot, and it so froze the marrow of my soul that I, very rashly, inwardly vowed never to see the " city of dust and wind " again. Since then I have changed my mind.

Tamalpais, which rises to a height of 2604 feet, to the left of the Petaluma road, looks higher and more imposing than it otherwise would were it not for its isolated position. The cañons which chisel its flanks are deep with sapling redwoods, young and straight ; it is entwined with the spiral track of a " scenic railroad," accommodated with hotels, a fine view, and other holiday ministrations. On the other side, the road, which wound over low, drabby hills, treeless, save in the regions of small towns, touched at intervals upon the waters

of the bay which, for thirty or forty miles from Golden Gate, afford a navigable channel to Petaluma. From the latter, the centre of a poultry-raising country, of the fortune-making possibilities of which the wire-pullers of the West cease not to cram the unwearied gizzards of aspiring Native Sons and others, I travelled in a heat that day by day increased to Santa Rosa. Hops are grown in the district, and, instead of the vines being trained up poles, as in the Kentish fashion, they are attached to wires and twine. This arrangement, spreading like an enormous net over wide acres of country, looked, in the distance, more like the handiwork of some spider of American magnitude than the result of man's labour. There must be many leagues of white twine used on these hop fields, and anyone who has ever endeavoured to make a lattice of string agreeable to the whimsical tastes of, let us say, a domestic scarlet runner, must sympathise with the unfortunate labourers whose duty it is to exercise their patience in these hop gardens.

Santa Rosa, a pleasant little town, is, as all the gardening world, and a good part of the remainder, knows, the home of Mr. Luther Burbank, the Edison of practical horticulture. Among the many wonderful "novelties" in botanical life which the old gentleman, whose name is most familiar to English readers in connection with sweet peas, has lately evolved, the spineless cactus appears likely to be a crowning triumph. The cactus in its natural state (see Chap. VI) is a menace to every living thing. Yet its flaccid, spongy "leaves" are so arranged that they absorb the

dews of night, becoming reservoirs of precious water against the heat of day. Once disarm the cactus of these venomous spines, which guard its priceless water with no less vigilance than the Arab protects his desert well, and the lives of countless thousands of cattle, which now die of thirst in the wilderness, might be saved. It remains to be seen, however, whether the spineless cactus (which looks curiously self-conscious and humbled, as a soldier stripped of his regimental trappings might look) will perpetuate itself in that form or at once revert, when placed in its native environment, to its original state. At any rate, the experiment is well worth the effort.

So keen is Mr. Burbank on the subject of the production of new flowers, up-to-date in all modern requirements, and so enterprising is he in his untiring efforts to get the conservative, obsolete old vegetables of our fathers' days to toe the line of present demands, that it is not surprising, in the absence of having made the undermentioned invention himself, he has been the first to discover the man who has. Here is the announcement as it appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* for December 9th, 1910.

"NEW PEA FOR KNIFE USERS.

"Illinois Farmer Evolves Vegetable Warranted To Stay on Blade from Plate to Æsophagus.

"(By Direct Wire to *The Times*.)

"NARZILLES (ILL.) (Exclusive Dispatch).

Luther Burbank went into the 'also ran class' here to-day with an announcement that a pea

that is guaranteed not to roll off a knife-blade has been invented by M. H. McFarland of this city. The new vegetable is a variety of the common garden pea, save that it has been so developed as to have a gyroscope principle.

" Proprietors of tourist hotels received the news with delight, and have already placed large orders. They figure that they will thus be able to abandon their stock of rimmed knives, which prevent the peas from rolling off when too hurried guests use the utensils *à la shovel.*"

Mr. Burbank is to be congratulated upon his magnanimity in so generously according the inventor of this new marrowfat the honour due to him. As other newspapers announced, with uncommon sagacity, this well-trained vegetable will supply a "long felt want" in Western America. It is yet another proof that, in time-saving inventions, the Americans still lead the van of progress. Doubtless Mr. Burbank feels a little hurt that an ordinary Illinois farmer should have anteceded him in this way, but there's still a wide field. Why not, for example, imbue with a little zest and piquancy the soporific pumpkin? The string bean, before it is safely canned, is a most unmannerly and stupid member of the vegetable tribe, twirling its silly spirals in the circumambient air, in the vain hope of clutching some ethereal stick, until it falls prostrate with exhaustion across the garden path, or, what might lead to worse things, round the neck of a maiden cauliflower. Then there is the common parsnip, well called the "hollow-crowned," which is still

foolish enough to grow a depression at the top of its head to collect the autumn rains, which hurry it into senile decay long before the first frost has come to give it that subtle delicacy which every really intelligent parsnip should enjoy by Thanksgiving Day. If Mr. Burbank, or somebody else, were to put it to the parsnip that a rounded, domed top, already in vogue among well-bred turnips, would mean a prolonged life, he would have done something for a humble, but not less esteemed, member of the vegetable kingdom, and earned the gratitude of man. If the new variety, with the cupola finish, were advertised as the " mission style " parsnip, I would stake " a thousand dollars to a doughnut " that the inventor would make a fortune, which would enable him to endow all the libraries and asylums in the West within a very short time. But why enlarge upon a subject which is manifestly so illimitable in scope ?

Healdsburg, which lies some sixty miles north of San Francisco, affords, in general plan, a typical example of a considerable number of the newer Californian towns. In the centre there is a *plaza* of well-kept lawns, shady trees, flowers, and seats. This is surrounded by an iron rail to which the people who drive in from the surrounding country tie their saddle-horses, teams, or single-buggies. Outside this there is a clean, asphalted street and " side-walk " with shops, restaurants, and hotels. At right angles to the *plaza*, roads radiate in all directions. These are generally lined by locust, " pepper," plane trees, or palms, according to locality ; and the lawns and flower gardens of the " homes " on either side fringe the pavement.

Though the low-built houses, with their deep verandahs, are often pretty enough, the general impression is, if a little stiff, a pleasing one. The well-watered lawns are, in summer, always refreshing after the heat and the dust of the sun-parched country, and, if many of the outlying streets have a raw, unfinished appearance, there is satisfaction in the fact that, if there is any life in the place at all, they very quickly lose it. In no country have I seen so spontaneous a change from the brick and mortar wilderness of the builder, to a green and smiling garden, as in California. All places of this sort, however, have not the good fortune of Healdsburg, Watsonville, and a few others. They rise and fall in prosperity like the individuals themselves. Sometimes they die ; and one of the most melancholy sights on earth, though not a rare one in the El Dorado State, is a town deserted, abandoned like a " pinched out " mine.

A few miles beyond Healdsburg, following the wide valley which is watered by the Russian river, the road branches, one fork going to Geyser Springs, the other through the extensive vineyards of the Swiss-Italian Wine Colony, the proprietors of which not only make the best wine in California to my taste, but seem to possess the earth in that district. At the parting of these two ways, where I camped one night, an old German and his wife keep a pleasant little roadside hotel, the nearest approach to a hostelry, such as we know in Europe, I had yet discovered. The proprietor, strangely enough, had only one complaint to make. He said that he had lived in almost

every county of California, and found the climate in the vicinity of the "Forks Road House" the very best he had ever experienced. He had built his establishment, was making money and enjoyed contentment. But just then a grievous blow had befallen the old couple. They had lost a favourite dog which had picked up some poison laid for coyotes and died. It was a Great Dane and a valuable animal. Had not any number of the rich, who motored by on their way to the Springs, pressed them to sell it? But it was evidently more to them than many dollars, and the genuine sorrow which shadowed those old people was very touching, a striking contrast to the shallow, heartless ownership which so often breeds the worst form of cruelty, too frequently shown by the Westerner towards his dog.

This instance of dog poisoning is only one of scores of others which came under my notice in California. There were few people I spoke to on the subject who, if they had not lost live-stock themselves, were not of the unanimous opinion that dogs and other animals were repeatedly being poisoned, either intentionally or otherwise. Strychnine for coyotes is laid without discretion on sheep pastures, even along the roadside. Squirrel poison is put down everywhere. But that is not the worst. There appears to be a breed of humanity, if one can use the last word, in most Western towns who, on the slightest provocation, and sometimes without any provocation at all, will poison dogs, cats, fowls, anything for mere deviltry. It is not the despised yellow people who make a hobby of this form of brutality. It

is bad enough that a State Government, elected by the people, but execrated and distrusted by them, should permit anyone to lay poison so indiscriminately (such a thing would not be allowed in any properly civilised country), but so long as they do so, how are the villains who practise poisoning as a pastime to be brought to book? If the subject were not one of such serious aspect I would not dwell upon it here. Let anyone who is inclined to suspect me of exaggeration make inquiries, and they will be awakened by revelations so astounding that they will, if nothing more, be supplied with food for thought upon the sort of order and morality which exist in "God's own country," or that portion of it which borders the Pacific, at any rate.

In spite of that Satanic trinity, the heat, the flies, and the dust, it was pleasant driving through the Swiss-Italian Wine Colonies of northern Sonoma county, with their prevailing appearance of prosperity and miles of refreshing green. Here was yet another instance which impressed one with the fact that it is the alien, and not the Native Son, who is making the most of Californian land. Cloverdale, but for the wooden houses, might have been some sleepy English village, deep amid its rich hay-fields, fine trees, and sheltering hills. Just beyond this pleasant little town, and before passing through the wooden tubular bridge which spans the Russian river, I managed to procure some of the best and cheapest oranges I had come across in the State. A bucketful cost but fifteen cents, and they were ripe, juicy, and warm with the sun, plucked directly from the tree.

Supplied by Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce

THE PLAZA : HEALDSBURG

From Cloverdale to Lakeport it is thirty-five to forty miles by the stage road, a great part of the distance consisting of a stiff mountain pass, with no store by the way and few habitations of any sort, save at Highland Springs, and the toll-gate on the summit (fifty cents for a single-horse rig: automobiles two and a half dollars!). But if the road lacks human companionship, Nature does her best to entertain the traveller by the way, keeping him wide awake to the fact that there are some fearsome gulches along the roadside, which suggest a sudden and tragic end should his horse prove nervous, or other accident befall him. But for the greater part of the way, the road of warm red soil winds up, ever upwards, through woods of majestic Douglas fir and clusters of madrona, while the banks are rich with flowers and fern. Brilliant little humming-birds dart with lightning speed between the tall trees, or hover like pendant jewels at the nodding bells of columbines. Great butterflies, gorgeous and luxurious, idle on the sun-warmed banks. Pretty lizards are everywhere curtseying and blinking in the heat they love.

The rugged cañon of the Russian river, with its deep water, now placid and sea-green between soft willows and grassy banks, and anon foaming white among the mighty crags that beset its way, is left behind at Pieta. Thence, following a smaller stream, which gave me some excellent trout, the Lakeport stage road climbs yet higher. The tallest conifers sink into the deepening valley, the soft grey foliage of nut-pine sways in the hot wind above white oak and *Manzanita*. At length, only

a deep green coverlet of chaparral clings to the rounded knolls of the "divide," and to eastward opens an unobstructed view of valley and hill, forest and plain, steeped in the drowsy atmosphere of summer which lies, a veil of dove-coloured mist, to the feet of the far Sierras.

Highland Springs, with its big hotels and summer guests, could offer me nothing in the way of stores or refreshments, for it is a cast-iron custom never to serve a meal at these hotels except at meal hours, and but little to interest me. But Lakeport, though it lies some forty miles from Cloverdale, and nearly seventy to Williams (its nearest railway stations !), proved to be a veritable oasis of plenty. Not only were stores, horse-feed, and such necessities in good variety, but midges, small frogs, and dead fish were there in superfluity. Had the first a taste for human flesh, I doubt if the population of Lakeport could survive a single summer evening. Happily, the tiny flies appeared to be possessed of but one desire—to die a sudden death by fire. For, when evening falls, all you have to do is to light a fire, and they pour into the flames in their myriads with a faint crackling sound. The campers along the lake shore, the residents, even the shop-keepers, set fires agoing, and into all of them, from some, to me, unknown and inexhaustible source, fly countless swarms of these midges. So numerous are they that, after a fire has been burning quite a short time, it will be encircled by a thick greyish-white substance, the ashes of myriads of cremated midges that, over and above those burned outright, die before coming in actual contact with the flames. Without a fire,

life in the open would be impossible, so overwhelming are the legions of these tiny flies which abound on those reedy shores.

The frogs were less troublesome. They were no larger than a thimble, and their obsessing idea was to hide from the sun. The consequence was that, unless I rose in the morning before they retired for the day, my bed, boots, clothes, papers, everything on the ground would be invaded by them. More than once I felt like the wicked Israelites must have felt, yet wondered why I had been afflicted thus. But, though I yield to no man in my detestation of mosquitoes, house-flies, and midges, I am ever disposed to be long-suffering, even lenient, in the company of infant frogs. These clean, nimble, shy little fellows have quiet, unassuming natures. They do not annoy you if they can help it. If they arrange themselves in orderly rows, with a snug sense of possession, under the folds of your blanket, they gaze at you and shrink back with such a pity-pleading expression, that it is often hard to turn them out. At intervals, for some days after leaving Lakeport, I kept discovering an odd one of them hidden away in the pocket of a spare coat, or other dark corner, and looking at me with the apologetic conscience of a stowaway.

With the dead fish that drift across Clear Lake and rot on its beautiful shores it was different. I wondered, it is true, whence they came and what caused the death of such countless numbers, but at that my endurance gave out; lighting an antiseptic pipe, I fled their company. The waters at the jetties, nearer the town, appeared to be

tolerably free of these unsavoury corpses. I am willing to believe that the succulent catfish is plentiful there and, under certain conditions, not averse to being caught. At any rate, the piscatorial Band of Hope, an assorted company, dangling their legs over the piers, all anxiously waiting for their floats to bob, made an entertaining picture, even to an angler who abhors bottom fishing and all that pertains to it.

One of the most flourishing of the many mineral-water resorts in California that I am acquainted with is Bartlett Springs, which lies forty-four miles west of Williams. Its enormous wooden hotels, set among the pines, have a strikingly Swiss appearance, though great mountains there are none. In my estimation the valley, in which the colony is situated, seemed hot and stuffy as a resort for invalids, indeed, for any but the robust. But the Westerners appear to enjoy it, and no doubt to them it is, by contrast with some of the towns of the interior whence they come, quite exhilarating. However, they flock there in their hundreds. Williams is the nearest station, and for forty-four miles the motors carry the guests to and from Bartletts over one of the vilest roads in the State. The bibulous and the obese, the dyspeptic and the gouty, suffer the trials, in which I may include the expense, of that tiresome journey with a faith in the restorative qualities of Bartletts' waters, which is more convincing as an advertisement than reams of chemical analyses.

The worst part of the road is its dust. The motors do their share in raising this, but it is the four wagon-loads of bottled waters, each drawn

by sixteen mules, that daily traverse the route, which are the primary agents in the pulverising of the road surface. To meet one of these teams on a track that is narrow and often precipitous on one side is not a pleasant business. Far away one may see the white dust-cloud rise as the wagon approaches. Then comes the warning tinkling of the mule bells, growing louder. You draw in to the first place that suggests a meagre passing and wait. Slowly the mules take the bend; the driver, perched on his high seat, shaded by an umbrella, bombards a sluggish leader with stones, of which he has a supply in a bucket alongside him. The guilty animal tosses its head with conscience-stricken recognition, and, at a funereal pace, thirty-two long, flapping ears, nodding time to every step, the team and wagon passes amid rolling billows of dust which hang in clouds on the still, languid air of the valley. If your buggy happens to be on the precipitous side, with outer wheels but a few inches from eternity, and the monster passes at a hairbreadth, you are expected to feel favoured by fortune. These incidents are not made any more enjoyable when, at the bottom of many a yawning gulch, one may look over and see the wreckage of wagons that have already gone to a fearful end.

It would seem that, no matter how flourishing a mineral spring "resort" in these parts may be, it is not always destined for long life. And one frequently comes across big hotels, rows of bungalows, skeletons of tent houses, and other familiar objects, which have once formed part of a "fashionable resort," all deserted and silent as

death. It is not that nature has "stopped the tap," it is not that the place may have suffered from any sins or wants of its own; it has simply gone out of existence. It has had its day and ceased to be. A full-blooded, more pushful rival has, perhaps, established itself in a neighbouring cañon, and, with a trumpeting of advertisements, drawn the easily-moved crowd of patrons from the older place and ruined it. Thus do fashionable spas (pronounce spays, if you please), like towns, fortunes, trades, presidents, "Society leaders," and almost every other thing, rise and fall in the unstable, ever-fluctuating atmosphere of the West. Nothing is constant. Men come and men go, but even the very streams do not always "go on for ever."

Having spent nearly two days traversing that grey valley of dust, I at length stood upon an eminence from which I could see, through a cleft of the near horizon, the great Sacramento Valley lying like a sea of purple vapour of infinite extent.

> A valley like an unsealed grave
> That no man cares to weep upon;
> Bare, without boon to crave,
> Or flower to save.

Immediately in the foreground were ranges of hills which, for sheer monotony, I never saw the like before or since. Somewhat pyramidal in form, but thrown together in parallel rows, in colour and texture more like a yellowy-grey cheese-rind dappled with round spots of dull green mould, they looked almost forbidding in their loneliness as they shimmered in the noonday sun. A hot,

scorching wind, that blistered the lips, blew off them like the breath of fire, as I entered the valley which cut through their geometrical flanks. Water there was none, save that of the pumps erected every few miles to serve the mule teams, and it was tepid and alkaline.

But pushing on for long, toilsome hours, often nearly axle-deep in a conglomerate of dust and smothered boulders, between the dismal ribs of those arid mounds of sun-baked soil and withered grass, and at intervals nearly devoured by clouds of venomous gnats, I at length found the level of the Sacramento Valley. It was a bare gateway of the same depressing elevations through which I had passed. But here the hills had closed in to a V-shaped passage which left sufficient space only, at the foot, for the road and a narrow gulch which held the green, slimy waters of a stream that was yielding up its rotting remains to the sun. Presently, in the trough of that barren, unlovely place, I came upon a great flock of sheep closely packed together, every individual with its head lowered below and between the bodies of its neighbours, so that the whole flock appeared as inanimate and uniform as one enormous headless fleece. The heat was overpowering, and, as I looked at the curious sight, two belated individuals approached from over the hill and hurried, with lolling tongues, to join the pack. They snuffed the turbid water, which stank horribly, as though they would drink, tried to toss off the flies which tormented them, and resignedly thrust themselves, head and shoulders, into the flock and were lost amid a multitude of backs. It was obvious that

the object of every individual was to screen its head, both from the burning sun and the flies, and it is not difficult to understand how, in a sun-baked wilderness as that was, from the initial efforts of one or two to shelter their heads in the shade cast by the bodies of others, the whole flock would become massed. At any rate, it was a piteous thing to behold that multitude of fleeces panting as one beneath the unsparing sun ; the stench of the poisonous, stagnated water ; the hot, oily smell of the sheep ; the ominous drone of carrion-haunting flies ; the torrid, verdureless walls of the narrow valley. And it was revolting to one's nature to think that animals, totally unfitted for such a climate, should be permitted to suffer thus ; horrible to contemplate the misery which that thirsty, panting throng must, day after day, endure, from the rising of the sun until the evening dews come to refresh the tired face of earth.

THE FOOTHILLS: SACRAMENTO VALLEY

A "THIRSTY, PANTING THRONG."—*Page* 256

CHAPTER XVII

THE PLAINS OF DESOLATION

THE plains of the Sacramento Valley were yellow with ripe corn, mainly barley, as I went on towards Williams, which showed like a small, dark blur on an illusive horizon of quivering haze. For miles, on either side, reached those undulating plains of grain or stubble. Far as the eye could see they covered the face of the earth with that dominant note—the struggle for wealth, for life—which is ever the concomitant of man's progress in the wide fields of labour. Not here does the earth yield up the good reward of a year's toil in fields that are garlanded with hedgerows of summer flowers. Not here does the great mother deliver the fruit of her loins to farmers who have nourished, coaxed, cherished the soil their fathers have trod for generations. Not here is the good old-time spirit of harvest, which goes to its quiet end in the golden hush of autumn, enriched with the memories of centuries of seasons of corn and wine and oil. The old October that mellows all things, that, for some has made as sweet a music of the droning steam thresher as ever made the flail, whose rhythmic pulse beat the requiem of each dying year, is unknown in the grain harvests of California.

There is pathos always in an old-world harvest, the sweet pathos which accompanies the com-

pletion of another season's toil, which haunts with a consoling tenderness the going down of the year's sun. When, in the lengthening shadows, the omnipotent sun has written in letters of old gold the word " Finis " upon the face of the country, and the quiet mother for a little while sinks exhausted 'mid the restful sighs of autumn's quiet, what time the dark seed of another spring is ripening for a new birth, we feel, as we feel at no other time, a conscious relationship between the earth and ourselves.

But in the grain lands of the Sacramento (and San Joaquin) Valley there are none of these things. The poetry and romance of harvest-time cannot live there. Nobody has any use for them. Like corn scattered on stony ground they might rise up in the glad spring-time of hope, but they would soon wither as lonely strangers in a land where they can get no root or sustenance. For there is something peculiarly unsympathetic, unlovely, yea, even brutal, in the contemplation of these leagues of grain ; in that Titanic monster which decapitates the straw, threshes its eared heads, winnows it, and sends the grain streaming into bags, as it slowly crashes with ponderous wheels through the long swathes of stubble and broken straw which it leaves in its wake. And apart from any sentiment in the matter, there is a wastefulness in the process which is revolting to any well-balanced knowledge of farming. A feeling of irrepressible resentment has often arisen within me when I contemplate that the soil, bullied into a production of so many bushels per acre, recompensed only with so much worthless stubble, is held to be of no more intrinsic

worth than the passing greed and ambition of some ephemeral owner can give it. The crops, as it is, are nothing to boast of in quality, though the grain in one's hand is often good. But one of these days there will come a time when the earth, robbed, starved and bullied, the fruit of her womb wrested from her in a struggle that is ruthless, yet, in a sense, heroic, will yield no more, unless in the meantime a more generous spirit is awakened, and the uses of fertilisers more liberally recognised, when the people who have emptied her treasures and abused her generosity will ask her for bread and she will give them a stone.

It is but the old tale of blind avarice that has already ruined so many of the natural resources of America, as those of no other country have been ruined. Demolish the timber of her hills, wipe out of existence her wild game, impoverish her seas and rivers of fish, starve her soil. Grab all, and care not one jot nor tittle for the morrow. Hunt the dollar and, for its sake, sacrifice honour, conscience, your good name, if you have one ; shirk your responsibilities, yea, even towards your most cherished national possessions, and let posterity go to the devil. All this is written on the sun-beaten face of this long-suffering earth.

To till the soil is one of the noblest and best of all the avocations of man. But when " trusts " and " combines " rule prices and people with a despot's tyranny, when " boosters," real-estate men and other silver-tongued deceivers play a cunning game of beggar-my-neighbour with almost every acre of land in the State, when people's heads are turned with dreams of golden wheat-

fields, and this Moloch has crazed and ruined as many as have the fabled mines of '49, and since, when land becomes the chattel of an hour, a gaming-table for adventurers, then I say that these wide plains of corn, whose limits are that hazy rim where earth meets sky, can be to anyone who loves the gleam of the ploughshare in a November sun, or the green scribble of young corn in spring, no more than a melancholy aspiration.

After travelling for some hours under a grilling sun, along that straight road which, some ten miles ahead, vanished in mist, the dim blur on the horizon, said to bear the prosaic name of Williams, began to assume a less ethereal form. As may be conjectured, the raw-boned town, a mere collection of wooden houses "bunched" together in the tawny, sun-stricken wilderness, did not rise in my appreciation as I entered its dismal streets, where my one object was to find a stable for my weary horse, and a shady tree under which I might endure the least possible amount of discomfort from that merciless heat, until the next morning. Having achieved the former, I came upon an old gentleman in cotton vest and trousers, who was, with philosophic gravity, watering the roof, the walls, the windows, the shrubs, everything that appertained to his little bungalow, with a garden-hose. He kindly invited me to camp in the shade of some locust trees that fronted his domain. It was, probably, the coolest spot in the town, and the thermometer, hanging under the branches, which moved drowsily in a burning sirocco, crept upward, ever upward, until, at tea-time, it stood exhausted as 118 degrees Fahr.

As I sat and watched the endless procession of mule-wagons bearing their burdens of barley to the enormous barns which adjoin the railway station, at the same time trying to satisfy my thirst with water melons and oranges, it struck me as somewhat strange that the bulk of the main product of this parched, drouthy land, should eventually become beer. These sad dominions of the sun were after all the vineyards of John Barleycorn, the origin and source of wine which maketh glad the heart of man.

"Ever had 'the shakes,' ?" inquired my neighbour with the hose.

"Never."

"Well, I reckon you'd better not go fruit-gatherin' if that's what yer after, for there's few who does that comes away without it. I just hate to see men, women, and children goin' by with their teeth clattering like a reaping machine when the heat's 'way up above a hundred. It's bad enough here. You wait till the sun's gone, and you'll see mosquitoes with beaks like humming-birds; and bite! why a rattler ain't half a match for'm. . . ."

With that comforting information, I went to the nearest drug store for some quinine, with which to fortify myself against "the shakes," and my informant, who had only corroborated what I had already heard on the way, resumed his watering. Of course, the chemist asked me if I was going to "lo-cate." With a candour that might have surprised one less accustomed to the native than I was, he expounded the advantages and delights of a "home," or, failing that, a little

investment in real-estate at Williams. He touched upon the climate with commendable optimism; the mosquitoes, well, yes, there were some, but they meant well. But there were never any thunderstorms, earthquakes were unknown, and the general condition of the town's morality was of an immensely high order. It was not a "wide-open town," nor yet had it the lid on; the citizens of Williams believed in a middle course.

It was odd that he should have mentioned the thunder, for I had not long regained the shelter of my locust trees, when out of the dark heart of a sultry sky there came the muttering accents of a storm. For nearly an hour it threatened in sulky, languid murmurs to break through the heavy, stifling atmosphere of approaching evening. Some isolated drops of rain smote the earth with resounding thuds, but eventually the clouds swung idly away to eastward, the blood-red fires of the sunken sun flushed the tawny yellow of the far hills with a ruddier glow, and, with the coming of the first evening star, came the first pinging, nasal treble of *Anopheles* the Damned.

All that night did I lie awake, the suffering prey of legions of these pernicious pests. "Dopes" I had long ago given up as entirely impotent to deal with the foes; the stronger the smell, the better had they appeared to like it. With yards of cheese-cloth I now endeavoured to parry their assaults, only to find the old truth verified, that one mosquito on the wrong side of the net is more venomous than a hundred and no net at all. I smoked till I could smoke no longer. I remembered

the midges of Lakeport, how they so obligingly committed suicide by casting themselves into the flames, and lit a fire with the vain hope that the mosquitoes of Williams might be equally condescending. But the taste of imported blood was far too good for them to dream of doing anything half so foolish. The fire only attracted more. For every one I slew, a hundred seemed to avenge its death. My hands and arms tingled to the elbows, my neck and face were swollen and aflame with a burning sensation. I buried myself in my blankets, but that only made the venom of the demons still more irritating; besides, it was so hot and sultry that the lightest covering was as much as one could bear.

Immediately on the other side of the garden fence a young lady was lying on a bed covered with an elaborately made net. But, even in that retreat, hers was no bed of roses. I could dimly see her tossing about, hear her exhausted sighs pleading for sleep in the hot, quiet night. In the house, my friend of the hose-pipe was restlessly moving about. A few yards farther along a mother and baby were in bed on a verandah, and in tender whispers she was trying to soothe the fretful child. On the other side of the way, among a collection of rank weeds, old cans, and rusty bicycle frames, two hobos were muttering in subdued syllables, interjected with fearsome oaths. But these sounds of distress, and there was a satisfaction, however feeble, in feeling that I was not suffering in solitude, came to me, not in the ordered sequence in which I recall them now, but in fleeting, disconnected fragments, broken by the

elfish horn of an invader threatening my ear, by the stinging thrust of some stealthy enemy who settled, with velvet feet, upon some other part of my afflicted body, and by my futile and wearying attacks against my nimble adversaries who, like the enemies of David, compassed me about on every side.

Sheridan once said that had the fleas of a certain bed upon which he once slept been unanimous, they could easily have pushed him out. Had these mosquitoes been unanimous in their attentions upon me, I think I must have perished.

Not before the brief twilight of dawn had announced the sun did the pests depart. That would be about four o'clock, and, as it is impossible in these valleys to rest in the open, or even in a tent, once the sun is up, owing to the teasing of the flies, I was away early. As I left the place, I was told that only a week earlier a man, a camper, had committed suicide by shooting himself a few yards from where I had tried to sleep. And so devilishly persistent were the attacks of those mosquitoes, so venomous their bites, that I can understand anyone who happened to be neurotic, and, perhaps, malarial, shooting himself with no other provocation than that of these pestilential gnats. One of the two hobos, who had spent the night blaspheming the enemy, said that they were even worse in the fruit districts nearer the Sacramento river, for there they did not only confine their attack to the hours of darkness. He was yet another who had left town for a few months' change, taking his wife and family to the fruit orchards, where good pay and a " pleasant, health-

A CALIFORNIAN HARVESTING

NEARING THE SACRAMENTO VALLEY

ful outdoor life" was offered them. The result was that, within a fortnight, his youngest child had died of malaria—"the shakes," as he also called it—his wife and two other children had to go home wrecked with the disease, while he himself was following them by "beating the train." The previous evening he, and others of his kind, all respectable men of the artisan type, had been discovered just as they were entering a wagon, and given the toe of an unsympathetic brakesman, so that they had had to "lay over" until the following evening, when they would once again make an effort to elude detection and get carried a hundred or so miles for nothing.

It would be easy for me to fill a small volume of these sad stories of suffering which the innocent victims of "boosters" and other unscrupulous villains have endured in the El Dorado State, and which had come under my direct notice. As I travelled east, form Lakeport to Williams, I met dozens of families, fever-stricken men, women, and children, with pale, thin faces and trembling limbs, with all their worldly possessions on board a ramshackle buggy, or some such vehicle, drawn by a broken-hearted horse or mule. They were fleeing to the sea from the plague which had wrought havoc with their constitutions, and the same melancholy procession may be seen any August or September day, following the northern road to Oregon, say, between Redding and Shasta. Yet the truculent lies are still disseminated, and, in the disease-stricken, interior valleys of California, every summer adds more sacrifices to the multitude of wrecked constitutions and devitalised

lives for which this malaria and other diseases are responsible. The wonders and possibilities of irrigation are proclaimed from the housetops, but never a word is whispered of its evil concomitants, the stagnant, poisonous water which lies brewing in the sun or trickles into the wells, and which is the hotbed in which are hatched innumerable legions of one of the greatest scourges known to man, the mosquito.

It is said, and I have no reason to doubt it, that California bears the unique distinction of being the only place in the world where the mosquito has been turned to useful account. It came about in this wise. There was once a mining hand who stole a bag of gold and hid it. He was suspected ; his guilt was proved ; but he would not say where he had placed the bag. To induce him to divulge the secret a variety of inflictions were imposed on him. He was stripped and mercilessly beaten with thongs ; even a yard of hose-piping, loaded with buck-shot and applied as a " cat," had not the desired result ; he was tortured with the readiest instruments which the wit of the mining blacksmith could invent, but he still kept the secret. Finally someone exclaimed, " Let the mosquitoes at him." Naked and bound to a tree, the mosquitoes went at him. But not many minutes had elapsed before he cried in agony, " Sure, I'll tell you where the darned thing is, I can't stick this, anyways."

From Williams to Red Bluff is nearly eighty miles. The road is as straight as a telegraph pole, and telegraph poles hedge its sides and form the main features of interest in the landscape.

Occasionally one passes a great barn for the accommodation of barley, by a railway siding. If fortune awaits the traveller, he may come upon at least one squalid little town in the course of a long day's drive, at which he may fall upon the hospitality of a horse-trough, fill his water-bag, and go on his way with a grateful heart. There are no trees to obstruct his view of the cheesy hills to westward; the vast extent of open country on the other side is equally barren. For many miles there is not enough cover to hide a grasshopper, for the soil is poisoned by alkalies, and the poor, thin grass of winter dies of a broken heart, and turns into a wiry, worthless hay, long before spring has passed into summer. The road is of great width, perhaps seventy to one hundred feet. There has been no effort wasted in the making of it, and it might not be recognisable as a road at all save for the fact that it is fenced with wire or wooden snake-fencing, and that a few planks which no judicious person would pass over if they could possibly find a way round, have been thrown across the wide fissures and cracks formed by winter's rain and summer's sun. It more nearly resembles an enormously elongated field, lined longitudinally by three or four tracks which, with the dilapidated fences and the companionable telegraph poles, all converge to a vanishing point on an horizon which is twenty miles distant. It is a road which precisely expresses the spirit of the people responsible for its existence. Its one and only object is to "get there"—somehow. No other idea ever entered its prosaic heart. Flowers on its banks? Trees by the way? It has "no use

for them." They have nothing whatever to do with a road whose sole object is to " get there."

For nearly four days, with, I hope, becoming patience and fortitude, I endured that road's company. The sun, wheeling his daily journey across the cloudless sky, smote me from above, the burning earth smote me from below. An illusive radiance of shimmering heat-waves rose up on every side, encircling me with its stifling embrace, undulating, quivering with an elfish, fiery glee, across the silent, colourless plains. Long before noon of each day, the heat became so intense that the little horned larks, often the only visible living occupants of the wilderness, sought the short, blunt line of shadow cast by the telegraph poles and an almost vertical sun, and in it squatted with drooping, listless wings until evening. It was the only shade, the only refuge on that vast face of earth, and there were from one to half a dozen of the little birds at the foot of every pole. As the day advanced they moved a little, keeping pace with the shadow as it passed like the hand of a clock over the dial of earth. So tenaciously did they cling to their poor retreat from the stupefying heat that burned above, below, and on either side of them, that they would almost allow me to place a hand upon them ere they would unwillingly creep a little distance into the sun with trailing wings. They at once recalled, by their peculiar posture, the always pathetic sight of birds perishing on fields of snow. Here, too, though how different the circumstances, was that deathly silence which broods over a frostbound earth, the terrible loneliness which haunts alike the hushed dominions

of the snows and the burning deserts, where earth and air and every living thing are subjugated to the merciless power of the sun.

For long hours these little birds (save my patient old mare) were often my only company. A few flies, it is true, rode with me, clinging with admirable sagacity to the wet cork of my canvas water-bag which swung at the side of the rig. At meal-times they shared my embalmed confections. When I rested they often served a useful purpose by preventing me and my old mare from over-sleeping the prescribed limit. Once on the road they again returned to their wet cork, and, like hobos, travelled many weary miles with the least possible expenditure of energy. Thus, even the universally despised fly can become of some interest in a dismal land.

During the late afternoon of my first day's march from Williams, a speck on the horizon ahead by evening became a little settlement of houses. There was a saloon on one side of the road, a railway depot on the other, and some tumble-down shacks scattered around. At the junction made by a track that cut my road at right angles, was a finger-post, pointing towards the hills of fawn plush which dozed in the mist, far to eastward. As every vestige of lettering had been shot away by the bullets of Californian marksmen, to whom motor-signs, finger-posts, and advertisements are evidently great sport, it was more eloquent as a target than a guide. What the name of the little settlement was, which at least appeared to have the modesty, an uncommon virtue in the West, to feel ashamed of its squalor, I do not know. But,

to judge by the names of other places in the locality, of which Williams is an excellent example, and knowing full well that the Californians, like the Children of Israel, delight to call the lands after their own names, I would hazard a guess that this wretched place was called Jones or, perhaps, Smith.

However, I entered the saloon, which appeared to be the only inhabited house in the universe at the moment, with the intention of making inquiries as to the possibility of discovering a suitable camping place for the night in the district. A vile, stuffy atmosphere of stale beer, bad tobacco, and onions greeted me as I opened the door. Seated on a bench was a man, who appeared to be a railway hand, having his "lunch," a word used for all manner of meals in the West. The said lunch consisted of a box of cracker biscuits, raw onions, cut into chunks of convenient size with a pocket-knife, and sardines, eaten out of the tin, a fish at a mouthful, also at the point of the said knife. He munched the trio with evident satisfaction, taking each in orderly rotation, and completing each round with a sip of steam beer. "Let good digestion wait on appetite" I prayed for his sake, and turned to the bar, which was presided over by a stout little man with one of his eyes a-missing, and the other round, bilious, and glassy, like an underdone poached egg.

I asked him if there was such a thing as a shady tree in the neighbourhood beneath which I might shelter from the sun.

"You bet there ain't, not within ten miles, anyways. . . . But, wait a bit . . . (Here the

poached egg gazed at the face of its owner's watch as if making a calculation). I reckon if you go to the north end of the long barn yonder, there'll be about twenty-six inches of shade, more or less, for th' next hour or so. After that yer can travel round to th' east side, same side's the track. 'Most all the campers lays out there. . . . I can give you all the water you want, anyway. Guess it ain't out of the Shasta tap, but it's th' best there is I reckon."

I sought the north end of the long barn, and found it as my acquaintance had stated. By sitting sideways I could just escape the direct rays of the sun, and, later, a grateful shadow of quite generous dimensions began to creep away from the eastern flank of the building. Had it not been for the afternoon sirocco that here blew across those torrid plains, parching the lips and binding one's head as with a girdle of burning iron, the place would have been a comparatively pleasant one. As evening fell, a party of half a dozen hobos hovered about in the gloom, waiting for the northward-bound freight train, which, like stowaways, they would surreptitiously board in the darkness.

That night the air was considerably lighter and cooler than it had been at Williams, and there were no mosquitoes to speak of. Still, I was not permitted to have the restful night I had so desired, for, no sooner had I lain down, than I was serenaded by a playful kitten. Whether it was the mere desire for company that brought her out of the barley barn to me, or whether she was attracted by my hairy blanket, I know not. But she

persisted in dancing about on my recumbent body, catching imaginary moths with fore-paws, like a juggler with his balls. Generally speaking, all the members of the feline tribe whom I had hitherto met, had distrusted me with a suspicion that was unflattering. They invariably either kept out of my way, or defied me as they would a dog. But this creature, a tabby in the first springtime of youth, did neither one nor the other. At first I put her to flight with what I considered sufficient expedition. But she only enjoyed the fun, and returned to her capers as soon as I had lain down. She toyed with my hair ; clawed at my blanket. While the buggy whip was in my hand she kept a safe distance, only to return with fresh vigour just when I was passing off to sleep. Ultimately, a more desperate endeavour to get rid of the pest struck me. When a very small boy I once, with the best intentions in the world, attempted to wash a cat under the scullery tap. That cat fled and never returned. The incident stirred me to make a final effort to put this one to flight with, in the absence of a scullery tap, a bucket of cold water. But catch her I could not. She had the light-hearted, wanton spirit of a butterfly, the slipperiness of an eel. At length, however, after a considerable time spent in stalking, and the sport conducted in pyjamas was not exciting fun, with a bucket of water in readiness, I managed to give her a fairly successful douche. But, imagine not for one moment, sympathetic reader, that that quenched the wicked spirit of teasing which possessed her, for, before I had got comfortably settled, she was back again and, perched on my

A HOUSE-MOVING

GROUP OF MULES: SACRAMENTO VALLEY

shoulder, indulging in that most irritating of all feline annoyances—licking. I was beaten. She had come as near to my ear as she could well come, to do her toilet, and, as the night grew colder, I dragged some folds of my tent (which I had not used since leaving Monterey) over my head, and finally went to sleep to the monotonous tune of that scraping, insistent tongue.

In the grey dawn of the following morning, I forgave mine enemy for all her nocturnal frivolity and invited her to a four o'clock breakfast. An old man, too old to risk riding astride the axles of a freight train, who was out of matches and had not got any coffee, made a third. It was delightfully cool and invigorating. A light dew had fallen, and that, and many subsequent breakfasts, were quite the most enjoyable part of each passing day.

As for the remainder of the journey, it was, with a few exceptional and brief respites, but a repetition of the day before. The great sun rose in his strength, dimming the blue of the cloudless morning sky with a thin screen of empurpled vapour, until the shadows grew shorter with the hours of approaching noon. So vertical were his beams at midday, that the shade cast by the telegraph poles was but a few inches in length, and there, in that meagre refuge, the larks crowded as before. Here the thirsty lands on either side became even more desolate and naked ; a solitary wooden house here or there, or a group of mules, packed together for mutual protection 'gainst sun and flies, only gave emphasis to the prevailing loneliness. Passers-by were few. A motor-car

would sometimes swing past, one or more of its occupants taking shots with revolver or rifle at the finger-posts, at the glass knobs on the telegraph poles, at anything which offered an apology for a target. An auto railway car, a hideous iron thing in a dull, hot red, shaped like a torpedo, the passengers looking through the row of circular portholes which serve as windows, sped along the track at remote intervals. Like some fiery ghost of modernity in animated steel, it furrowed those lonely dominions of earth and sun and air, as a submarine might plough the unknown deeps. Whence it came or whither it went seemed matters of no moment in that wilderness.

A tiny speck on the horizon, as it approached, turned out to be a house being conveyed on a wagon. The owner dozed on the seat behind the horses. The interior contained the family and domestic goods, which included some fowls and a pig. They, too, were fleeing from the miasma of the irrigation lands to seek "fresh fields" nearer the sea.

Upon the afternoon of my third day the heat became still fiercer, and the country, in consequence, seemed even more oppressive. A depression such as that which accompanies seasickness possessed me. My flagging energies were poured out like water; my heart was like melted wax. I was completely undone. Dark ogres of regret, miserable visions of a life misspent, all the carelessnesses, the troubles, the unhappinesses which a perverted memory could recall or distorted imagination create, assailed me, their yielding prey. Like a sick dog that seeks out offal

to satisfy a vitiated appetite, so my weary brain sought nought but evil or sadness in past and future. Ill-chosen antidote as it was, I found some disconnected lines of an old poet running in my mind :

At sunset when the eyes of exiles fill,
And distance makes a desert of the heart,
And all the lonely world grows lonelier still,
I with the other exiles go apart,
And offer up the stranger's evening prayer.

* * * *

I am a stranger in this foreign place ;
Strange are its streets, and strange its tongue ;
Strange to the stranger each familiar face.

'Tis not my city ! Take me by the hand,
Divine protector of the lonely ones,
And lead me back to the Beloved's land—
Back to my friends and my companions.

At my feet, on either side, were the uncomplaining little birds, prostrated, panting in their tiny patches of shade. Not until they had followed by slow degrees the creeping shadow, as it measured its tedious journey round the post, would the brief reward of evening be earned. Yonder, deep in the burning heart of the iron hills, the miserable sheep were still patiently waiting for the passing of the sun ; still, with buried heads, enduring the stifling heat with silent submission. In the shafts, my good old mare was a lather of sweat, though she always made her own pace, which seldom exceeded a walk. Apart from the distressing aridity of the roadsides to a horse with a preference for grass above all things, I doubt not that she had her own opinions of matters, and

that the straightness of the road was to some extent as tiresome to her as it was to me. As I thought of these things, as I yearned for, heaven knows what, I, too, could have buried my head under the seat of my buggy, and wept.

But that was not the worst, for finally, even the straggling wire fences deserted me. Their faint shadows had not been unwelcome in that vast world of sun and withered hopes; their dilapidations at least afforded passing interest, however dull. Had the telegraph poles, between which I was borne a passive burden, gone too, I might have wandered into the unknown, and sank, as a stone sinks, into the aching nothingness of the wilderness.

But, after all, it is mainly by contrast that we gain the keenest appreciation of natural scenery, as well as of most other things. So when, one evening, I came to a wide, gravelly river-bed with its soft, cool willows, where the thermometer fell to seventy before sundown, and where a clean, invigorating wind washed my stupefied, jaded senses like water, I cannot say that I regretted my sojourn on these torrid plains. Under any other circumstances this grey, windy, willowy place would have been less welcome. That evening I was cheered on my way by the first view of Mt. Shasta. With the going down of the sun and the dissipating of the haze, the great mountain rose, a majestic pyramid, dominating the northern horizon. Long after the evening shades had gathered about my camp, did the alpenglow flush its lofty, snow-veined flanks. Though still a hundred miles away, its rugged architecture

stood out against the blue of evening, cold and hard as chiselled marble.

How delightful it now was to traverse the rich alfalfa lands of the Tehama district, with their grand old oaks hanging over the road. Here the reapers were almost hidden from view in their fragrant, lilac-tinted crop; from the boughs of the roadside oaks were suspended wisps of sweet hay which they had combed from the passing load; there were happy, prosperous-looking farmers in the homely little fields; the wire, or wooden fences had become hedgerows of clematis, vetch, tall willow herb, wild roses, and other summer flowers. Indeed, but for the scarcity of bird-life, I might have been in some valley of Hertfordshire or western Essex.

Having made Red Bluff, a cosy, well-to-do little town on the banks of the winding Sacramento, and some two hundred and fifty miles from San Francisco by the way I had taken, I camped at a ranch, held by a genial and entertaining retired shoemaker, in a little valley immediately to the north of the town. By the following evening I had fallen an easy prey to the quiet comforts of Anderson, and, being Saturday, decided to there make a week-end of it. For weeks I had not tasted any really cold water by the way. But here, from a well beneath a little colony of fig-trees, I could draw, by means of a bucket, rope, and old-time spindle, an unlimited quantity of water that was cold without being iced, and which, after the flat, alkaline fluid one had so often to put up with, had the sharpness of champagne. Furthermore, Anderson provided the most superb peaches that

it has ever been my pleasure to eat. They were three pounds for fifteen cents, and the vendor apologised for the high price, explaining that they were the first of the season ! Figs, both black and green, were plentiful at about a cent apiece.

Again I had pleasant, kindly neighbours, and a shady place to camp beneath some fine oaks, hard by some lovely gardens, with their oleanders, pink, white, and pale buff, flooding the morning and evening air with delicious fragrance. Anderson appears to be one of those cheery, prosperous communities which are the hub and centre of a wide country, rich in agricultural lands and pursuits. There is a box-factory within the town, it is true, but the latter draws its main support from the ranches and homesteads, far and near, of whose very existence the casual passer-by might be entirely ignorant, so wooded and undulating is the country. In a word, Anderson is, or so it seemed to me, a market town, like Healdsburg and many another ; and for market-towns no less than for market-days, I have, as the reader may have guessed, an old and friendly feeling which, engendered in England, is refreshed and stimulated by contact with the week-day gatherings of the tribe of Hodge, wherever the zest for travel may lead me.

CHAPTER XVIII

ON THE OREGON ROAD

THOUGH all roads are said to lead to Rome, there is, or was, only one by which the traveller, who is nearing the higher waters of the Sacramento, can go to Oregon with safety and expediency. For the purposes of this chapter, let it begin at the ferry which crosses the above river at Redding.

The craft which bears the traveller over this noble stream is very far removed from its counterpart at say, Sausalito, or Salton. In the first place, when I arrived at the water's edge, it had just landed at the opposite shore and, in spite of our united vocal efforts, for sundry other wayfarers had gathered there, the crew of three men left the barge at anchor, and wandered with exasperating equanimity to the nearest house for "lunch." Thus we had to possess our souls with patience for the greater part of an hour under the rays of a noonday sun. Eventually, the trio appeared, and, by means of a wire attached to a windlass, conveyed the barge with ponderous gravity, to our side. But even then we were not permitted to embark, for something had gone wrong with the wire arrangement which, at our end, was attached to the boughs of a leaning tree some thirty feet from the ground and hanging over the water. Hence, there was nothing for it but that the three bargees must

ascend the tree where, among the branches and coils of doubtful-looking wire, they indulged in a lengthy argument, interjected with those expletives which are familiar as monosyllables in bargee language anywhere. After considerable wrangling the thing was so far adjusted as to justify a descent from the tree, and, though the doubts and disagreements expressed by the crew were not of a kind to strike the passenger with any sensation of comfort or reliance, I felt that we owed something after all to our arboreal ancestors. Ultimately we got afloat, and were landed on the other shore, not without a feeling of gratitude.

About a hundred yards down-stream there was another wire stretched from bank to bank. From it half a dozen or more lines were floating in the green current, and in the centre was hanging a large cow-bell. I asked one of the bargees what the contrivance might be, and he explained that at the end of each line was a spoon-bait for catching salmon. The bell, in the event of a fish being hooked, would announce the capture !

" Do you get many fish in that way ? " I asked.

" Na," he replied, " once in a great whiles, maybe ; them spoons has been spinning for six months, day and night, but the bell don't ring anyways."

Immediately on leaving the ferry the road began to ascend a rocky shoulder of the Shasta foothills, and in ten minutes I had seen the last of the great central plain of Northern California. The road had been roughly excavated. It was obviously a watercourse in the winter season, and now there was little more than a narrow

FERRY NEAR REDDING

ON THE ROAD: NEAR BARTLETT SPRINGS

track of loose stones which rolled under one's feet and, with the rocky walls on either side, reflected the fierce rays of the declining sun. On either side was a parched, unkindly, hilly country, sparsely covered with the dead flower-stems of earlier days, scrubby *Manzanita* and soft, pale grey conifers. A few solitary crows, innumerable lizards, and an odd jack-rabbit were the only signs of wild life by the way. Weary with the roughness of the track, I was glad to hail the evening shade of the forest, as it closed in upon the tiny hamlet of Buckeye.

It was July 3rd, and great were the preparations being made at the central establishment, an inefficient combination of saloon, post-office, and store, of the colony, for the proper celebration of the "Glorious Fourth." There was much bunting displayed on all sides. Stars and Stripes swaddled every unsightly board of barn and verandah; they wall-papered the wooden erection put up for the accommodation of dancers; festoons of ensigns hung limply in the sultry air from tree to tree. The most notable feature about this display was the fact that the bunting bore none other design than that of the Union, and I could not but think that the exclusive use of "Old Glory" was none other than a rather specious exhibition of insularity on the part of a people of professedly tolerant views. It may be argued that we cannot judge a people by what one may observe at a remote village. But, go where you will in America, it will be a rare occurrence to see any ensign other than that of the Republic displayed to view, while all other nations use flags

of various designs without discrimination, on occasions of popular rejoicing.

The interior of the saloon itself was, in addition to the familiar colours, decorated with wondrous creations in coloured paper, which afforded the innumerable flies tremendous amusement. Its barrel-skids and shelves were groaning under the burden of a full list ; the ice-cream machine was being sprayed by anxious hands with a hosepipe of the coldest water the neighbourhood could yield. Everybody was in that high state of nervous tension which broods over the eve of a calamity, and it was only after the most judicious pleading, only after I had walked some miles to and from half a dozen ranches, that I could obtain enough horse-feed for the night. It strained the efforts of the whole family at the store to the utmost, to provide me with a few simple necessities. Everybody was so busy. There was so much going and coming, bustle and commotion. Yet it appeared to me that there was very little being achieved beyond talking and drinking. What did one want with bread and stamps and eggs on the eve of " The Fourth " ?

The only person amid that little centre of mental ferment to whom I was of the slightest consequence was a broken-down old man, who was deaf as a post, and had lost his wits. He lived in a little dilapidated hutch among the trees, and kept repeating to me, with the dull repetition of the insane, that it was " Independence Day." He would follow me about, as I gathered wood or fetched water, with the same remark ever on his lips. If he hobbled back to his hutch, he only

arrived there just in time to suddenly remember that he must immediately push his way back through the bush to my camp, burning with the desire to tell me that it was " Independence Day." It was in vain that I tried to make him hear, hopeless to impress upon him the fact that while I shared his sympathies, he was a day too soon. Had he not been wholly insane, I might have taken his persistent attentions for the gibes of an unfriendly spirit.

That night I went to sleep to the tune of the British National Anthem (the air of which, as already pointed out, the American nation has appropriated for its own) played on a wheezy accordion, mingled with the strains of " The Star-spangled Banner," which sprang from a vigorous automatic piano (hired for the morrow's fête). An incongruous blend of music, the one melody, to my ear, being strangely at loggerheads with the other. I wondered, as I had often wondered before, why the Yankee still sticks so faithfully to " God Save the King," more especially on Independence Day. Is it to perpetuate the memory of that bungling old gentleman, King George III, or to serve as a reminder that though July 4th, 1776, is hailed as the date of " Independence Day," the British National Anthem, as such, was heard in the land for at least five or six years after that ? Thus it may seem appropriate to some that the English air should mingle with the strains of " Yankee Doodle " on July 4th, as it did in the smoke of battle one hundred and thirty-six years ago. If that is not so, then why not make a fresh start and, as I have suggested elsewhere, elect another

tune for a national air? But the Yankee may, after all, perhaps, be pardoned for any seeming incongruity in the matter, for Washington himself was a pure Englishman, and the "Stars and Stripes," in its original form, none other than an English coat-of-arms, that of the Washington family. The whole affair is inextricably confused and, given a better feeling on the American's part towards England, there need be no cause for dissension on such trivial matters.

Upon the hilly, forest-clad country in this part of California, large herds of swine are run in a semi-wild state, living mainly on acorns. Hence the excellence of much of the west coast bacon. The hogs, as they are generally called, are seldom fed, but, to prevent them from becoming so wild that they would flee with a snort of defiance at the scent of a human being, the swineherd, always on horseback, must needs hunt them up every few days and, coaxing them to him with a long, low whistle, give them a little corn as a proof of his friendly intentions. To the camper these pigs are often a great source of trouble. His road lies through the open woods, and he "lays out" for the night where best he may. But woe betide him if a herd of hungry porkers, who have learnt to hang about the regions of camps in preference to hunting acorns, invade him when night falls. There will be no peace for either himself or his horse till morning breaks. So tame and impudent do some of these camp-scavengers become, that I have had them walk over me and nibble my blanket, after all efforts to scare them away had failed. No article of food or clothing, not even boots

and kitchen utensils, come amiss to these lean, dark-skinned thieves. I was not surprised to learn that a goodly number of them disappear at certain seasons. Deer is hard to find, in some places extinct; small game there is practically none; fresh meat can seldom be purchased anywhere. Everybody carries a rifle and a hunting-knife, and pork is a dish dear to the heart of the Native Son. So little pigs vanish, and the coyotes, though they, too, are all but extinct in most parts, are given the blame.

The region of the Wyndham Ferry, which crosses the Pitt River, will ever remain in my mind as a country of the Gadarenes, so great were the herds of swine which serenaded me there, and so overwhelming their impudent deviltry. How I wished that some spirit of evil would possess them, and send them violently down a steep place into the foaming Pitt!

I arrived there early in the day. The ferryman was, even at that hour, full of "The Fourth," and goodwill. Seeing that I was hot, he invited me to follow him up the hill-side to taste the water of the "coldest spring in California" (you are no American if you have not got a superlative of some sort at your elbow). I did not regret the trip, for the water was icy cold without being flat. Filtered through shaly soil, and dripping into a little moss-fringed basin of rock which no sun-ray could ever reach, that water, drunk from a ladle of rusty tin, nestling in a cluster of *Lomaria*, was at that moment the rarest and most precious vintage the highways of California had ever yielded me. My acquaintance, who was an American of the clean-

shaven, even-featured, smiling type, had himself evidently been primed up by indulgence in a more stimulating liquor. But was it not "The Fourth"? That fact he kept repeating at hiccoughy intervals, and, finally, in honour of the great day, conveyed me across the river "gratis and for nothing."

There is a remarkable similarity in all the hills which border the deep cañons of the rugged country which lies between Redding and Shasta. Great rivers, very Norwegian in effect and colour when the glacier snows are melting, boil and fume in a tempestuous torrent between pale grey rocks and sombre pines. Of level or "cleared" land there is very little, but here and there one hits upon a rancher's house, with its plot of green corn (maize) and apple trees. The forests are thin, often entirely destroyed by axe or fire, or both, and rarely do the rocks rise above the soil, save in the river-beds. Tall spires of pines and a few clusters of live-oak are scattered thinly, upon an undergrowth which, where the forest is open, looks at a distance as close-set and shrubby as heather. In places where the trees have but recently been destroyed, the cloak of the hill-sides is as a moth-fretted garment, threadbare, patchy, desolate.

On the other hand, one may often wander through miles of noble trees and luxuriant undergrowth, which are, ever and anon, watered by some cool streamlet making its mysterious way beneath the shade of wild vine, azalea, spiræa, and syringa. A sultry fragrance fills the air; wonderful swallow-tail butterflies, their broad wings enamelled with

lemon-yellow and jet, doze upon the spots of bright sunlight which dapple the tapestry of the woodland floor ; on the road of soft, red soil, the buggy moves without noise ; the resinous incense of firs and " cedars " fills the lungs and leads you on with a renewed vigour ; out of the trees, too, there comes the sweet sylvan breath of secret, unknown things ; a snake leaves a slithery trail of paler tone on the ruddy dust ; a blue jay may pierce the solitude with a harsh, wild cry. And again the sounds of rushing waters return like the voice of the wind in the tree-tops, as you wind down to the next cañon, and, in the flood of sunlight which awaits you, the road may, as likely as not, be bordered with the smiling welcome of some flower which many of us know and love as a " half-hardy annual " in the gardens of the Old Land.

The Indians who live about these wooded cañons, in little huts of sun-warped shingles, patched with rusty, hammered-out coal-oil cans, are a sorry lot. Having been granted the privileges of citizenship, on the assumption that he has "adopted the manners and customs of civilisation," which, when it means whisky-drinking, do not agree with him, an Indian is, as is his brother of the reservation, at best, a spectacle which fills one with the sympathy one has for poor, but respectable, dependents. All have a sad fixity of expression, most are ill-clad, and live like jackals on any leavings they can pick up. Yet many of the men are still proud of their race, their daughters handsome enough to induce many a white man to marry them, in spite of the fact that, by

so doing, he is earning the scorn and derision of his own self-chosen breed. For, though the American may make what boast he chooses of his "generous spirit" towards the Indians, the fact remains that he looks down upon them, despises them, distrusts them no less heartily than he does the Chinaman. The Indian may disregard the law when it comes to a matter of procuring fish or "deer meat," but, in his own lights, he has a prior claim upon the yield of the soil which is his by birth-right. He may be, should cause arise, a treacherous neighbour, but, if he can be hot-handed, bloodthirsty, and revengeful as an enemy, there is no living man who can be more reliable as a friend, more faithful to those who treat him, not necessarily well, but with justice and humanity.

As an illustration of friendship and goodwill on the part of a Californian (Digger) Indian, the following incident, for the truth of which I can vouch, is convincing. An old Indian, who had accidentally wounded himself with a gun, was found in the forest by a rancher who attended to his wounds and helped him home. Years passed by, and the incident was forgotten. But one day the Indian found some stray cattle, and, noting that they belonged to the man who had befriended him, corralled and fed them. Not being able to drive them alone he set off on foot to the ranch, thirty miles away, to which the cattle belonged, acquainted the owner with his discovery, returned with him to assist in the driving, and positively refused to take any sort of recompense for his trouble. Though others had forgotten the result of the gun accident, he had not done so. Pointing

THE SACRAMENTO: NEAR SHASTA SPRINGS

to his old wound, his dark eyes glistened with a smile of gratitude for the past and satisfaction in having at last been able to reward the man who had succoured him. That is the spirit in which the Indian returns a kindness. It is not in his blood to love his enemies (any more than it is in ours), and woe betide the man who treats him shabbily. An injury he will resent and avenge with all the stealth and fierce instincts born of centuries of tribal war.

It is no place here to dwell upon the political and social status of the Indians. It is a subject of enormous magnitude, beset with difficulties, and California of to-day has comparatively little to do in the matter. But I will say this, that it is the most ridiculous form of incongruity, for America generally to hold herself up as the sympathiser of all those poor people—Boers, Irish, English poor, Persians, natives of India, and heaven knows how many more, all of whom are said to grovel before the despotism of the haughty English monarchy! During the South African war, it was America "whose heart bled for the Boers." It was America who lifted up its voice to stay the hand that would rob the peasantry of England for money to spend on the coronation of King George V. It was, again, America who denounced the "base humiliation" of his Indian subjects before the throne of Delhi, while the wretched aborigines of the State of Alaska, to mention only one race, were living in a state of such piteous degradation, poverty, often starvation, the like of which has scarcely been seen in any other civilised country, not excluding Russia. I do not

say that America has not tried to make some amends to the Indians, to wipe out the stains of blood and pillage and oppression which bespatter the pages of her history. But she has not done one-hundredth part of what she ought to do ; she, with her enormous wealth, who spends, in society functions alone, more in a week than ever a Coronation (which only comes once in a generation) cost. Let her cease criticising other people's business and attend to her own. The condition of the Esquimaux of Alaska is so appallingly distressing, that it alone should keep her busy with her own affairs for many years to come. But I do not wish to emulate America's example, and put myself out of the way to weep crocodile tears over a matter that does not immediately concern me. All I ask is that she set her own house in order before she begins meddling with the affairs of her neighbours which, if her press be any guide, she knows next to nothing about.

Though the railroad through the mountains of Shasta County has been engineered with commendable skill, the making of the roads appears to have been given little or no thought. Granted that the distances are enormous, and the difficulties of repair great, in so extensive and hilly a country, many of the roads hereabouts often appear to be nothing better than old trails dug out and widened, without respect either to grade or the necessities of modern use. The Oregon road, that follows the Sacramento from Kennet to Shasta Springs, is a thoroughfare that every year carries a greater burden of traffic. Not only is team haulage getting heavier, but automobiles grow

more numerous, and the great army of campers and emigrants increases with every summer.

All the roads of Northern California, immediately to the south of the Shasta foothills, all the trails of Oregon, may be said to converge to one end or other of this mountain highway, and into it passes that human stream which goes and comes in pursuit of pleasure or work, from the opening of the roads in May, until snow and winter floods render them impassable, save for short distances. For six weeks I, who had been one of that stream of vagrants, became a looker-on from the point of view afforded by a wayside ranch, just north of Antler, where I was generously accorded not only the cooler, refreshing delights of a more invigorating climate than that of the plains, but that genuine, practical hospitality, at the hands of the rancher and his family, which will always remain among my pleasantest recollections of California. That instinctive kindliness shown to the wayfarer in the West is one of the best fruits of pioneer days, when mutual help was the parent of development, no less than the strong arm of progress. The rural Native Son to-day is as ready with his good-nature, ready to divide his last dollar with you if need be, as ever he was. Like the Indian, he is as keen to resent the advances of anyone in whom his quick eye detects symptoms of patronage, infidelity, snobbery, or assumed superiority, as he is anxious that you should share his calumet of goodwill. So invariably kind, thoughtful, and helpful did I find the ranchers during my excursion of over eight hundred miles of road, that I almost feel a sense of reluctance in making an exception

of my good friends already alluded to, by whose pine-log fire-place I stayed until approaching winter and the urgencies of life, necessitated a return to the old mill.

At the front of the ranch there was a "flat" of open ground of about half an acre in extent. A few oak trees cast a shade over parts of it. On one side was the road, and the other was bounded by the railway, beyond which flowed the Sacramento between its lofty, pine-clad banks. Hard by the "flat" there was a cool spring, a "crik" of delicious water, firewood in abundance, while bread, milk, fruit, hay, even a bed or a dinner, if one desired one or both, could be procured at the ranch. Thus, if one considers that stores, horse-feed, and other necessities are like angels' visits on that highway, it was not surprising that the "flat" was often as busily accommodated with campers and their teams, as is a popular hotel-yard of an English country town on market or fair-day. Among the crowds who came and went to and from that brown, sun-scorched "flat," the migrating parties were quite the most numerous and interesting. They came from the far south, their horses thin and themselves weary with two thousand miles of travel. They came from the Canadian line and beyond, making for the south. The one lot would mutter in syllables of discontent that Arizona and California were no mortal use to a man who had to make a living; they had heard that Oregon was better, and meant to try it. The others, going South, would cast all manner of aspersions against Oregon, or Washington, and would be full of the untried

possibilities of the Golden State. Here they met, almost every evening during summer, to rest a night, or " lay over " for a week-end, and exchange opposing views on the eternal subject, the best place to live.

I have already mentioned the restlessness of the Western worker. Whether he be rancher, artisan, mechanic, miner, or " two-dollar man " (labourer), he is ever on the move. Dissatisfaction with wages, the uncertainty of the labour market, ill-health, the result of climatical conditions, an instinctive desire to be for ever trying some new sphere of work, and the trumpetings of " boosters " and " real-estate " men, are ever nudging his elbow and urging him to move. Doubtless, too, the prospect of some months of tolerably easy days, sitting in a canvas-hooded rig, with but little to do beyond feeding his team and cutting some wood, appeals to the nature of some. There will be no rent to pay ; his wife will do the washing at the " crik " on Sundays, while he loafs about with a rifle or fishing-rod ; he may earn a few dollars, often enough to pay current expenses, by exercising his trade, if he has one, by doing " any old thing " as occasion may arise. Thus the summer passes pleasantly enough. In winter he is an " out-of-work," clamouring at the gates of the cities, demanding, as his birthright, a living wage from somebody. But easy-going wanderers of this sort are few compared with those who are ready and willing to work, and who are so often the dupes of unscrupulous " boosting."

Had the wire-pullers of California and Oregon, to mention only two Western States, some con-

science, had they the strength of mind and honesty to look matters squarely in the face and recognise that this place or that is already overstocked with labour, that some of the land offered to settlers is not worth a dime an acre and much that is said to be worth three hundred dollars, is a swindle, a great deal of the distress and much of the demoralising influence of a vagrant life might be avoided. But these ranting demagogues care no more than the pseudo-patriotic scribes who write flowery articles to the magazines and Sunday papers, whether the crowds they influence succeed or perish. In its race for popularity and the immigrant's money, the State must keep its bell ringing and gong clanging when the train draws up, lest the other fellow (the neighbouring State) at the next coffee counter may draw all the custom. It must shout the advantages it has to offer, with the vehemence of a nigger preacher proclaiming the joys of Paradise, and keep shouting. Even though hundreds, nay thousands, of disappointed and all but penniless people are every year " going back East," as many, with hopes running high, must be ushered in. Thirty years ago, when the " Amateur Emigrant " was nearing California, he wrote: " We were continually passing other emigrant trains upon the journey East; these were as crowded as our own." And further: " . . . The passengers ran on the platform and cried through the windows, in a kind of wailing chorus, to 'come back.' On the plains of Nebraska, in the mountains of Wyoming, it was still the same cry, and dismal to my heart, 'Come back'!"

How bitter a cry that must be to-day, when times are harder all round, and the number of people going and coming is so enormously increased, it is not pleasant to try and contemplate. But, in a lesser degree, the traffic on the Oregon road gives voice to the same tale of bright hopes blighted by disappointment, and natures soured by the nasty flavour of defeat at the hands of misrepresentation and chicanery.

Almost every conceivable form of vehicle is pressed into service for the summer exodus in California, but, though ancient buggies in the last stages of decrepitude would appear to be a highly-favoured type, covered wagons, prairie-schooners, buck-boards, old timber-carts, converted for the conveyance of human freight, and ponderous Studebakers, afford a variety. Horses, mostly of a lanky, raw-boned description, mules, of which I have seen no finer specimens than in California, and donkeys, are the beasts of burden. The people who travel thus were, to me at any rate, hard to place. The half-caste, Mexican, Celt (whether of Scotland or Ireland), Italian, German, or Native Son were not difficult to differentiate, but the others, the bulk of the crowd, were like so many birds of passage which, though belonging to the same natural order, are separated only by minute differences of habit and colour, the influences of environment, which are conflicting to anyone but a close student. Even those wayfarers in tongue and manner all betrayed subtle individualities of their own ; they leave in one's mind a certain general impression of similarity. They were all bent upon a common object, which was either to

start life afresh in a new sphere or, having failed to better their conditions by a previous trek, to return whence they came. All were dusty, weary, often depressed and shadowed by the spectre of doubt and uncertainty of the future. In the case of a family, the man and wife sit on the driving-seat. At hand is a rifle or gun of some sort, to what purpose it is hard to conjecture, for there's no game to shoot, save an odd porker. Among bundles of bedding, trunks, cages of fowls, perhaps a stove, kitchen utensils, a dog or so, and boxes or sacks of food, the tired children, with sunburned grimy faces, roll to and fro with every heave and jolt of the wagon on the rough track. For such a load two light horses will be in the traces, while a reserve animal, often invalided with a sore shoulder trails dejectedly at the rear. The less fortunate, in "single," open rigs, must grill beneath the unsparing sun as best they may. None ever travel beyond a slow walking pace, and twenty miles a day is not often exceeded without distress to horse and man.

To most of these people who pulled on to the "flat," I appeared to be a constant source of curiosity, mainly because my outfit contained a comfortable deck-chair (they always used inverted buckets or coal-oil cans), because, faithful to my nationality, I had been known to take exercise for exercise sake ; and I appeared to have no visible means of subsistence. That I should camp for weeks in the same spot, and incidentally make a frugal living by the aid of a pen—a statement always received with a certain show of incredulity —was to them an impossible sort of life. I was an

AFTER A FIRE: SURVIVORS AND SAPLINGS

A WAYSIDE RANCH: OREGON ROAD

MOUNT SHASTA, FROM SISSON HATCHERIES

enigma, and, though the Native Son is always more concerned with his own aims and object than with those of his neighbour, and does not hesitate to let that neighbour know it, he is never quite at his ease unless he first feels assured of the one primary fact, the nature of his acquaintance's business. Once he has learned that he will talk about himself without cessation. Or, if he does pause in his parade of self to lend an ear, he only does so to allow his friend to conclude the more expeditiously, so that he can continue to unburden his tongue of the pressing, but often wholly uninteresting and always egotistical incidents of his own life.

However, if the visitors to the "flat" looked upon me as a curiosity, possibly as an amiable sort of lunatic or "remittance man," they were, to me, no less interesting. They were, as I have said, apart from nationality, hard to place. The weariness, the dust, the heat, the everyday life of the long road, is such a leveller of all men, that it was difficult, even for my host, a native Westerner, to say what the particular trade, or calling, of this man or that might be. The Westerner engaged in any outdoor work wears gloves so assiduously that the hands of a clerk and a ploughman may look alike. One brawny, dust-coloured, unshorn visitor, who might have been a teamster, extracted from the bowels of an overflowing rig a case of dentist's tools, and invited custom of an evening on the "flat." Another, whom we had put down to be a mechanic, transpired, in the course of conversation, to be an oculist, and before he left next morning had

fitted the rancher's wife with a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles! A thin, malarial, hollow-eyed little fellow, with a long family and a shrimpy wife, who might have been a warehouse clerk or a chapel superintendent, turned out to be a repairer of gasoline engines, with a bent for refractory sewing machines. An old dame of Herculean proportions, a voice to match and a taste for angling, travelling alone, would, after she had finished her Sunday washing at the "crik," come round with some dainty, feminine things in hand-made lace. Yet another, of either sex, would be willing to earn a dollar or so by picking and boxing peaches, apples, or other fruit.

One day a comparatively smart four-in-hand drove past. In it was seated a man, his wife and maid, and a Japanese servant. He might have been an English aristocrat, some Vanderbilt abroad with equipage and retinue. But, imagine my consternation, when I learned that he was none other than Mr. Jack London, in other words, "The Great Socialist"! My host and I, who had derived no little interest of a competitive order in trying to guess the nature of the respective callings of the visitors to the "flat," gave the sport up after that. It was, as he put it, a "clean knock-out." I don't know how a "Great Socialist" ought to travel, but possibly a home-made, self-propelled wheelbarrow would be the most consistent form of conveyance.

There is only one other visitor who I can mention here, and he was an old man who drove in a dilapidated buggy, drawn by a horse that had once been white. He had a beefy, rotund, florid face

that might have belonged to a well-to-do Italian priest, and he wore an old silk hat with the crown cut away about half-way down. His white hair stood out in a tuft at the top, and he sat on a camp stool chanting, in a quavering falsetto voice, the Lamentations of Jeremiah for the greater part of the week-end that he spent with us. He had been, this much he vouchsafed, ineffably wicked, at no very distant date either, and was now a servant of the Almighty, travelling the highways of California with a cartload of texts and printed slips containing prayers in such infinite variety that one at least might have been discovered as a ready-made antidote for the sins of any particular brand of malefactor the old missionary might hit upon. Though I could not descry a paint-pot among his kit, I suspect he was probably one of those who daub those cheerful warnings, already alluded to, on the planks of decrepit bridges and the brinks of precipices. He was, of course, an old humbug, but, after he left, I was disposed to credit him with more sense than I thought he had possessed, for I found he had nailed upon one of the oak trees of the "flat" this text, printed on cotton—"For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" That is a question which will never be out of season in America. If the printed text is still there it will probably be pitted by bullets, but a man might do worse than disseminate such rare advice.

The automobilists who go back and forth on the Oregon road, were a set apart from the daily occupants of the "flat." They would almost

exclusively be on fishing or picnic excursions. Still, they had some features in common with those who travelled by the humbler equipages. The "sport," who sits alongside the driver almost always has a ready rifle, butt on thigh, in attitude of tense anxiety lest a ground-squirrel, a foot-pad, a borax advertisement, or a finger-post should suddenly break into view. The ladies, three or four in a row, behind the gallant outpost, their faces scorched by sun and wind, sway from side to side, prostrated, passive, and inclined towards ill-temper. For, refreshing as the breeze which the car may create by its passage through the air can be under some conditions, it is often just the reverse under a Californian sun. Let the sirocco blow, or let there be no wind moving at all, the motorist will feel the heat more intensely than the man who goes quietly in a rig, though, of course, the former has the great advantage of being able to pass over uninteresting parts of country in less than one-third of the time occupied by the latter.

Whether the cars used in America are more reliable for rough work than those of European make, I do not pretend to know, but the Californian driver certainly takes his machine over tracks so rough and precipitous that few English motorists would care to tackle them. The probable explanation is that the Westerner has more ready money, is more careless, and to "take chances" is part of his joy in life. A break-down, either of the engines or tyres, is not the serious and annoying matter it is to the more sober Englishman.

There was yet another class who, though not in a strict sense passers-by, were almost daily

visitors at the ranch. I refer to the old prospectors who live apart in little wooden cabins among the pines of the deep, silent cañons. They are ruminating, uncommunicative, white-headed men, hoary relics of the strenuous, romantic days of the gold rush. Like the Indians, who went with the game, so the days of the old-time prospector were numbered when placer-mining became overdone, and the feverish pulse of half a century ago dropped to normal. Those wild days are gone for ever, and California will never see their like again, though the hill-sides, disembowelled and scalped, will long bear witness to that desperate madness which possessed the fortune-hunters of '49.

"We have no industry left *now*," said an old prospector to John Muir, "and no men; everybody and everything hereabouts has gone to decay. We are only bummers—out of the game, a thin scatterin' of poor dilapidated cusses, compared with what we used to be in the grand old days. We were giants then, and you can look around here and see our tracks."

Though the output of gold from Shasta County alone is still considerable, mining to-day must be a prosaic business to the "dilapidated cusses" who once felt the burning thrill of those young days when—

> "The good old rule . . . the simple plan,
> That they should take who have the power,
> And they should keep who can,"

was the sole arbiter of destiny and fortune in the land of gold.

CHAPTER XIX

FEATHER, FUR AND FIN

In a country, such as America, where democracy, though a professed faith, is a mere figment of imagination, a catch-vote of the hustings, and where an individualism, desperate and fierce, reigns in its stead, one need not look for an abundance of game. Of course, the poor Indian, to whom wild game has meant existence for centuries before the coming of the white man, is usually made the scapegoat when the gradual disappearance of fish, wild fowl, or deer is discussed. But, granted that he may be justly accused of a considerable amount of destruction, that he kills irrespective of season, I am inclined to believe that the " game-hog," the market-hunter, and the rancher between them, are a far more serious menace to the stock of wild game in California than is the numerically inferior aborigine.

Take up any outdoor magazine you like in Western America and you will be confronted with a photograph, often on the outside of the cover, of some " hunter " surrounded by festoons of fish, strings of quail or duck, or carcasses of larger game, some, or all, of which constitute the " limit " allowed by law ; and that word " limit " would appear to comprise all that sport means to many votaries of the chase out West. It is the hope of

the shaver of ten, the goal of fame which awaits the "hunter" of maturer years; and which is chronicled, as such, in the Sunday newspaper. Rather than generalise thus, let us take each of the game destroyers in their order, hear their defence, if they have any, and, by so doing, we may arrive at some more useful conclusions regarding the deplorable scarcity of wild life in California. That most of it is on the verge of extinction is such common knowledge, it were idle of me to dilate upon the subject.

We have seen that upon the shoulders of the aborigine is thrown the heaviest burden of blame in this matter, and, in a few districts, there may be some justice in the accusation. But, it must be remembered that the Indian kills for meat or clothing, and, in his eyes, there is no law that can prevent his doing so. He may kill out of season; he may not discriminate between buck or fawn, nor spare the pregnant doe. Impelled by the same instincts which guide the hawk or the mountain lion to their prey, he slays that he and his may eat and be filled. Or, if he has "adopted the manners and customs of civilisation," he is ready to wait on the beck and call of the saloon-keeper, the proprietor of the boarding-house at mine or saw-mill, or the rancher who is too idle or too busy to hunt himself, and for any one of these he will get a "mess of fish," or some "deer meat" at any time they may be wanted. He will, small blame to him, go far and endure much for the white man's coin. But from what I have myself seen of deer brought down from the hills in the midst of the close season, it has usually been the white man,

rather than the native, who has both encouraged the breaking of the statute and enjoyed the feast of the forbidden luxury.

But, while it is obviously wise to hold some restraint upon the Indian thus tempted, no less than upon those who encourage nefarious shooting, there is something to be said in extenuation of both. There are times when a man craves for fresh meat. He may have been living on tinned meats, or had no meat at all, for months, and if a deer passes his way it is more than human nature can do to resist shooting it. It is on the grounds of this necessity, for it often amounts to such, that I would deal lightly with the rancher who, having an opportunity to obtain fresh meat, gets it, irrespective of the game laws. And, while I would not impugn the game-warders with complicity, I believe that many of them, being human, recognise the above circumstances and deal with them in the only reasonable way. They know, or I presume they know, that the rancher or Indian, though there are exceptions, who shoot to live, are not the most serious offenders. It is the " limit " hunter, the " tuft " hunter, and button-fancier, the creature who gets photographed surrounded by his victims, who has his name put in the " sports " column of the newspaper, who, by his loud talk in the smoke-room o' nights, makes the spine of the genuine sportsman creep with disgust, mingled with grief ; it is upon the swollen head of this " game-hog " that lies the grim record of game extinction and devastated forests. Defence he has none. His vulgar pastime is a travesty upon the good name of sport ; he

himself, a base, and fulsome effigy of honourable men. We have his counterpart in the "muddied oaf" of our English football editions, the cheap hero of a degenerate crowd of underdone young men who show their allegiance to their favourite gladiators by making collections of their coloured pictures which, incidentally, stimulate the sale of the nasty cigarettes with which they are given away.

The difficulties of dealing with this Californian "game-hog" are the same in kind, though they differ somewhat in degree, as those found in any other country. He may be the son of some local celebrity, or even the great man himself, in which case, even supposing the warden to be bold enough to run him in, a prosecution can seldom be successfully carried out. Provincial juries, even magistrates, of the most incorruptible provinces in the world, have been known to extend sympathy rather than justice to the malefactor before them, and the law courts of America are by no means exceptions. Indeed, there are few Americans of balance and intelligence who do not deplore the fact that, if there is any country in the world wherein a criminal, let him be a murderer or a trivial offender, has a chance of going scot-free, that country is the United States. Then, as if there were not difficulties enough in the way of exterminating this class of pest (including the market-hunter), the several States of the Union all have their own peculiar statutes, which appear to differ from one another just sufficiently to make easier the way of the man who wishes to dodge the law. This absence of co-operation in the interests

of common justice, as I have stated elsewhere, is as helpful in providing loopholes of escape for the man who desires to scorn the prohibition farce, who has a leaning for law-breaking or immorality in any other form, as it is disastrous to the welfare of game.

It has been argued that the only way to check the ravages of the unscrupulous sportsman (would that I could use some other word) is for the Federal Government to deal with the matter. But in a country like America that would be an all but impossible task, though a backing-up of the States' Governments by the Federal authorities would doubtless help the present system, or, rather, systems. The "game-hog" has a fear of the Federal officer that is not always inspired by the State or county warden. What would do far more for the preservation of wild life is the arousing of public sentiment on behalf of, not only the game, but of the forests and other national treasures which are threatened with annihilation.

In 1908 Mr. Roosevelt called together a great congress of State Governors and others, with the intention of discussing the best means of staying the hand which threatened with extinction the natural resources of America. It was a splendid ambition, and in one of his speeches the then President said: "In the past we have admitted the right of the individual to injure the future of the Republic for his present profit. The time has come for a change." Yet the very man who spoke those belated words is the man who boasts of having shot the last of the buffaloes with his own hand. If you turn up his book, *The American*

Wilderness, you will find these sentences: "By the close of 1883 the last buffalo herd was destroyed." Yet six years later he "heard there were a very few bison left around the head of Wisdom River," and sets off in pursuit of them. After hunting long and "faithfully," he eventually finds "two or three cows, one calf, and one old bull." This veteran, probably the last male of the last little herd, he shot, and was proud of it! If Mr. Roosevelt, with all his strength of purpose, cannot avoid the inglorious heroism of the basest pot-hunter, what hope is there for a better public feeling regarding wild life? Of what avail are Governors' congresses, and a multitude of laws? It is individualism that wins out in America.

Much wanton destruction of bird, and human, life might be avoided if the indiscriminate carrying of firearms was prohibited. Every male, and often the women also, from the age of nine or ten upwards, carry rifles in California, with the inevitable consequence. Shooting affrays and fatal gun accidents, among people of all ages, are of everyday occurrence. Of the innumerable motor signs, finger-posts, and advertisements which line California's roads there are, as I have already shown, few which are not bespattered by bullet-marks, the enamelled notices offering a reward for the offenders often suffering the most. Bird life is so appallingly scarce that one may travel for miles over many a country road and never hear a note. Insect pests, in the absence of their natural enemies, are a menace to every form of agriculture and forestry, and are said to destroy at least one-fifteenth of the annual crop. According to Mr.

William Dutcher, of the National League of Audubon Societies, the damage done by insects and rodents to agriculture and forestry in one year, in America, amounted to eight hundred million dollars. And, from what evidence I can procure, it is the West which suffers most seriously from these pests. In Oregon, to mention only one and that an adjoining State, they manage these matters better. Wanton roadside shooting is there not the everyday pastime it is in California, and the authorities are backed-up in their efforts to enforce the laws by a public sympathy, which is, unfortunately, both feeble and erratic, or absent altogether, in the El Dorado State. Yet, even in Oregon, more desperate efforts were lately being made to stay the steady decline which on every side threatens to end in the extinction of all wild life, save mosquitoes and flies.

The time is not very far off when matters, so far as the market-hunter is concerned, will settle themselves, for his business will come to an end, as surely as that of the buffalo-hunter came to an end. He will have done it to death by his own hand. Already many " side-lines " have " pinched out," owing to extinction, and before very long he will have to go in for another job. Even now, he finds it profitable to turn his attention to vermin, such as coyotes, pumas, and other destructive creatures, for whose skins a price is paid by the State. But the verminous coyote is growing scarcer in some places, and, with the unpleasant prospect of his industry decaying before his very eyes, a Shasta County skin-hunter devised a plan by which he would put off the evil day, by breeding

these condemned marauders, and thus keeping up the supply of pelts for which he would get his subsidy. For a long while his "proposition" worked very well. To his lonely hill-side menagerie of skulking criminals he added other furred species of ill-fame at intervals. Every year he slew the adults, carried the pelts down to the local authority, received his subsidy, *per capita*, and, possibly, some praise for his prowess as a hunter. He began to get on in life. But one day there came an end to his nefarious trade. A traitor in the shape of whisky loosened his tongue; he was found out and "put behind the bars." Nevertheless, I am assured that "game preservation" of this nature still continues in some of the remote cañons of Sierra Nevada, and the much-desired total extinction of coyotes and pumas is indefinitely postponed. If I remember rightly the State bounty for a coyote skin is five dollars (£1), and that for pumas twenty-five dollars (£5), so that the game is well worth the candle.

Being somewhat of an anarchist at bottom, with a wholesome detestation of law or restraint of any sort, the Native Son (*Californicus*), in common with his brethren of other States, hates the very theory of game preservation as carried on in Europe. He would rather see an hundred thousand acres ticketed "National Forest Reserve," which means that it is public ground, for very obvious reasons carrying little or no game, than a preserve, the property of a private owner. He both scorns and ridicules the practice of game preserving, whether applied to grouse moor, pheasant coverts or deer forest, as familiar to

Europeans. Why? first, because it does not suggest a state of democracy to his mind; and, second, because he knows nothing whatever about it. Yet, let that same man get on in life, let his dollars increase and multiply, and he will be among the first to pay an enormous rent for a Scottish grouse moor, or deer forest, which his own devastated land has failed to supply. The wise men of the East have long ago realised that some of the best sport of its kind in the world is still to be had in the British Isles. They fling their shallow democratic illusions to the four winds, pay their money, and enjoy the good results of game preservation. And there are few Californians living who, if they had a little more loose cash, would not immediately go and do likewise.

But the average Western sportsman, who has not the patience to study the subject, is as ignorant of English and German game preservation as I am of American politics, and of the latter I know next to nothing at all; my mind and body recoil from their dark ramifications. But I am quite sure of this (and how idle it seems to repeat such a stale old truth!), that the days of the sportsman who has to depend upon the open country for his game are numbered; and that before many decades have passed away there will be more game left in a little English county than there will be in the whole of the bewildering vastness of the Pacific Slope, unless some radical change soon comes about.

Yet, with that paradoxical affinity for contradiction so peculiarly his own, the Native Son, in one respect, casts his theoretical qualms against

game preservation to oblivion. He cannot easily be quite consistent in everything, for there is a lot of human nature in him after all. Thus, while he will have nothing to do with the preservation of grouse, pheasant, deer, or trout for his private use, he makes an exception of wild duck. Why? Nobody seems to know. But duck clubs and "idle rich" are often coupled together without fear or scruple. I would like to know how a man, or body of men, satisfy their consciences that it is quite within the tenets of the religion of their national life to preserve one bird for shooting purposes, while it is deemed a heinous offence against democracy to preserve another. For my part I only wish the practice would be extended, for no man can rear and protect game without also benefiting the community, more especially in a country such as California. At any rate, preserved game is better than none at all.

Why, if it were not for the splendid efforts of the State Government in hatching and rearing trout and salmon, which are turned out in millions every year, there would not be a stream worth fishing in California to-day, and the enormous industry of canning salmon would be at an end. If the hatching and rearing of these fish is not the very foundation and germ of game preservation, I would like to know what is. In Oregon, though I hesitate to again draw comparisons, for sister States in America are not given to sisterly love, they are beginning to establish game farms which shall have somewhat the same relationship towards the forests as the fish hatcheries have towards the rivers, and in that State they do not

seem to be so afraid of that bogie word, preservation, as they are farther South. The result is that one can get some tolerably good "bird shooting" in Oregon, and I have seen pheasants on the banks of the Willamette, in a building district not two miles from the centre of Portland.

There is still plenty of quail shooting in California, if one knows where to go for it, and that is about the best one can say regarding the small game. Deer, as I have already shown, are now hard to find anywhere, and mountain sheep, if there are any left, are happily excluded from the sportsman's list altogether. Some black and brown bears, and pumas, are still to be found in the recesses of the mountains, but for grizzly the aspiring hunter must now go much farther North. That despised individual, the jack rabbit, which looks like a miniature kangaroo with gigantic ears as he lopes across the plain, is either very scarce or a ubiquitous pest, according to locality. The little cotton-tail, being of a more succulent nature, is not so common, and would be still less so did he not so cunningly keep to the cover of the densest scrub.

One more word on the subject of shooting and I am done. The visitor to California who, acting on the advice of the "boosting" advertisers, takes a gun with him, is surprised, when he gets there, to find that, while the resident (and the term includes the "game-hog" and all his tribe) need only pay one dollar for the privilege of shooting, he, the stranger, is mulcted to the extent of twenty-five dollars. I am aware that in other countries, notably in some parts of Canada, the licence is sometimes

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far more than that ; but when a man travels five or six thousand miles for the express purpose of getting really good big-game shooting, always an expensive pastime, there is no reason why he should not, in these days, " pay through the nose " for the privilege. But when, as in my own case, he intends spending a few winter months in California, where he may, incidentally, enjoy an odd day after quail, he resents having to pay such an outlandish sum for licence to do so. I have put the matter to several of my friends in the West and, while they unanimously agree that the matter might be adjusted in favour of the casual sportsman whose credentials are good, they make excuse for the heavy licence on the grounds that it has been levied with the object of shutting out the Oriental and other marauding aliens.

" You were not so dog-gone soft as to pay it ? " said one Westerner to me, who evidently shared that deep-rooted contempt for law which is so characteristic of the average American, " 'Most nobody thinks of buying a licence over here."

" But you forget," I responded, " that while you may be safe, I—the foreigner—would immediately become the prey of the sheriff. I would be held up as an awful example, a warning to others."

With a gesture of impatience by way of response he moved away at that. But one has only to read the daily papers to know that such things are so. Thus the non-resident licence becomes a piece of unmitigated " graft."

From one point of view I can sympathise with the sportsman who evades the licence, for I am

given to understand that the revenue received from that source is not devoted to sports' purposes, as he desires it to be. Where does it go? Ugly tales are ever afloat in wellnigh every town in America of civic balance-sheets which are cooked, and of local political and municipal authorities who, once in office, suddenly become opulent and, but that is another story. . . .

Generally speaking, there are few classes of men who are more willing to do their duty by the laws of the country they happen to be in than the British sportsman. It is born in him to respect the statute. He could no more shoot game out of season or dodge a licence, than he could malign his own mother. But he likes fair dealing, and if the Californian desires him to visit the Golden State, and the advertisements prove that he would move heaven and earth to get him, licences must be put on a fairer basis, and a mightier effort than is now being made must be put forth to restore some of the wild life to the silent mountains and empty plains of the great West.

. . . . . .

An Englishman, who was once sent out by his Government to prospect and report upon the natural resources of certain parts of the North-Western States, summed up the results of his investigations thus: "Country not worth a damn; salmon won't rise to fly." But, in spite of that, and notwithstanding the fact that the Pacific salmon will not, as a rule, rise to fly, the fishing which may be enjoyed in California is first-rate. *Salmo irideus*, the rainbow trout, is the finest, gamest, loveliest fish that swims, and California is his

home. In the streams that trickle down the shady cañons of Southern mountains, and lose their little lives in the gravel beds of the torrid plains; in the "criks" of the coast ranges that flow with unbroken merriment beneath the dark shade of live-oaks to the white sands of the sea; in the mighty rivers which have their birth in the seven glaciers of Shasta, rivers whose sea-green torrents have graven in the forested hills some of the deepest, loneliest, and most awesome cañons in America; in all the living waters of the Western ranges dwells the incomparable rainbow.

The steelhead is another species, much like our British salmon, which runs to great size in most rivers flowing into the sea from Santa Barbara northward; and the cut-throat trout, often found in the slower rivers of the inland valleys, where rainbows are less common, makes up in delicacy of flavour for its comparatively ugly shape and colour. Though I have never had the good fortune to see a specimen, I am told that a singularly fine local species (doubtless a sub-variety), called the golden trout, inhabits the head waters of some of the rivers which descend from the region of Mt. Whitney. Of the Pacific salmon, as a sporting fish, I know next to nothing beyond the statement already given. Nothing will induce it to rise to fly in Californian rivers, and all the sea-run fish which I have ever seen were singularly dark in colour and cloddy in build. At Monterey, however, the salmon in the bay give good sport to those who like trolling with spoon—and what salmon! For six cents a pound you can buy in that delightful old town the choicest piece of the most deli-

cious salmon that ever connoisseur could desire. Was there ever a better excuse for eschewing the doubtful pleasures of a choppy sea in a small boat ? Personally, I welcomed it as a heaven-sent gift.

Then, to do justice to the fishing which California affords, one must not forget the Tuna Club at Avalon, which I have already alluded to, and where, in the words of the President of the British Sea Anglers' Association (Mr. F. G. Aflalo), the fisherman, whose object is the great fishes of the deep, may get " the finest fishing in the world." For two reasons I refrain from entering into the subject of tunas, albacores, and yellowtails—to mention only three of the monsters which have made Avalon famous the world over among sporting men—and they are these : (1) I do not profess to be a marine angler, and (2) both the veteran Dr. Holder, of the Tuna Club, and Mr. Aflalo have, in their books dealing with that branch of the art of angling as practised at Avalon, described the sport with such masterful handling that there is every good reason why I should not enter upon the subject. I have read and re-read their entrancing chapters with an avidity that does not fail, and to the interested I can but exclaim, " Go thou and do likewise."

But to return to the rainbow, to visit which, in the land of its nativity, was one of the main reasons which induced me to travel over six thousand miles. You may come across him, as I have said, " 'most anywheres " in California, but to see him at his best, I think, the famous streams, McCloud, Sacramento, Pitt, Klamath, and others which drain the great Shasta water-

shed, afford the best sport, though there are many others farther South which might deservedly claim a mention. In all these the fishing is entirely free, and a wise State Government goes to an enormous annual expense in keeping them stocked. One hears many complaints that this river and that is "fished out," and, though that may often afford the unsuccessful angler with a ready excuse for a blank day, my own experience, which extended to some six months in various parts of Northern California, is that, while some waters may be too heavily fished, the stock is generally quite normal. This is the more remarkable when one realises that no restrictions are put on the nature of the bait used. Grasshopper, spoon, minnow, even salmon roe are permissible, and, while the first and last-mentioned of these lures are in daily use, one is surprised, not that some streams are over-fished, but that there are any adult trout at all left in any of them. If it were not for the stupendous work of stocking thousands of miles of water, in which the authorities are ever engaged, there is no doubt but that angling in California would soon go a-begging. As it is, there are enough fish for everybody. Will the people, upon whom the existence of other, less fortunate, game depends, take the hint, and do as the fishing authorities are doing ?

The local rural fisherman in California, be he ranchman or Indian, is no angler in the best sense of the word. For rod he uses fifteen feet of bamboo, all of a piece. This he calls a "pole," while a basket of fish is a "mess," and to English ears it is curious to hear, in go-ahead America of all places,

these old Waltonian words still in daily usage, words which have not been in use in England since gentleman wore ruffles, and periwigs went out of fashion. But that is by the way. With his "pole," a long piece of string and hook that would moor a yacht, our Piscator setteth forth to angle. He first tries fly or spoon, because they are less trouble than natural bait, but if they won't take he forthwith falls to grasshopper, roe, or "barnacle" (the larva of a caddis-fly). Knowing by instinct, or practice, where the fish are likely to be, he flings out his bait unceremoniously, and, if the current does not move it for him, draws it gently down-stream until he feels a bite, when he immediately strikes. And what a strike! Before the unfortunate fish knows where it is, it is being hurled through mid-air to fall with a thwack on the rocks, or into a jungle of brush. It has never dawned upon this angler's mind that "the play's the thing"; a landing-net he has no use for. The main thing is to get a "mess of fish," which he can sell at a shilling a pound or consume at home, and he gets it in the most expeditious way.

Meanwhile I plod along, sustained by that brimming hope which fills the orthodox angler's breast, which helps him to think less hardly of the sweltering sun. With eleven feet of the choicest greenheart that ever yielded to the strain of fighting trout, with a line as virtuous as Cæsar's wife, a brace of flies that would bring a smile to the forbidding eye of an eel, or melt the sinister heart of a squaw-fish, with all these, yea, with the cunning begotten of more seasons with the wily trout than I always like to remember, do I pursue

with (let me be modest) seemly patience the ravishing beauties which will have none of me or mine.

But my friend with the "pole" is good enough sportsman at heart. He knows his methods are inelegant, and does not spend words in self-laudatory excess when we come to compare baskets, for I am not always unsuccessful. He knows, furthermore, that there is much merit in doing the "right thing," and that his heavy basket is not heavy enough to outweigh the fact that my trio of three-pounders called for the exercise of more skill than would the getting of a cartload by some meaner plan. Indeed, the only Americans I ever met, who ceased not to make scornful aspersions towards the fine tackle and light rod of the practical angler, were those who had never seen that rod and tackle in operation. And it would be strange if it were otherwise, for is not America the land of light rods? But, although the rainbow trout is generally accorded the credit of being a free riser to fly, there are times when even he, as I have already indicated, sinks to the level of grosser fish and stubbornly refuses to rise at all. This is especially so with big fellows, of from two to four pounds weight, in July and August. Having failed with fly, the angler may generally arouse the curiosity of these old stagers with spoon or artificial minnow; and he need suffer no qualms of conscience for using one or other, for these heavy fish are inveterate cannibals, they will rarely look at fly in the hot season if they can get bottom feed, and it is my opinion that they either die at the age of three or four years (the age

at which they disappear so mysteriously in English waters), or descend to the sea never to return.

The tackle sold in Western shops is invariably bad, and, though the cards upon which the flies are displayed are almost always marked "Made in Scotland," I presume by way of recommendation, I never yet saw the name of a British manufacturer accompany the statement. Are they made in Scotland? That is a question I would like to see proved. The quality of gut, the tying, the hooks which bend as easily as a hair-pin, the weird creations in feather and tinsel and wax, are a nightmare to anyone accustomed to the use of British-made articles. These things may possibly be the handiwork of probationers in the art, and they may be shipped out here at a low price to satisfy the whims of fishermen who do not know what a really good article is; but no manufacturer who valued his reputation would suffer his name to be associated with them. That is the kindest explanation I can offer on behalf of the affair. All the flies used in California are very large, but, while admitting that the rainbow generally likes a conspicuous lure, I have often had excellent sport with a cast such as one would use for the little three or four-ounce trout of a Welsh moorland brook. With a Claret Hackle, Wickham's Fancy, and Coch y Bondu, of minute size, on very light gut, I have on more than one occasion caught a heavier basket of better fish than a companion, a professedly expert Western angler, with his heavier tackle and ornate Royal Coachman of regulation size. With the stream as

clear as gin, and the blue sky flecked only by a scudding cirrus of silver, it would perhaps have been the more remarkable had I been less successful. But custom dies hard with the fisherman, even in America, and the Western angler will, I take it, continue to flog the waters of Shasta County with a cast (a " leader " he calls it), which I am convinced is not always a happy choice.

There are some good rods, as every angler knows, made in America, and some very bad ones. The best are expensive, the others, sold at four to five dollars, are rubbish. You can get as good a split-cane rod in the States for, say, fifteen dollars, as you can get anywhere for the same price, and it will generally be reliable, well-balanced, and nicely finished. But such short trout rods as one can buy in England or Scotland for a guinea (five dollars) cannot be approached, either in elegance or efficiency, by any similarly-priced article in America. Of reels one may say that, while there are some good articles on the market in the Western States, I would like them better in bronze or gun-metal than in the usual highly-polished nickel, and I have never yet used one that can compare with the ordinary check-reel of British manufacture. I am not prejudiced, and want to be fair, but there is not the reliability, solid workmanship, and finish in any American reels which I have seen, as there is in ours ; though in minor " improvements," by which term I mean patent checks, patent releases, and other incidental inventions, innumerable and 'cute, the Yankee reel, I am willing to admit, knocks the British into a cocked hat !

CHAPTER XX

AROUND MT. SHASTA

When in the Shasta region, I made a visit to Sisson with the twofold object of seeing the fish hatcheries and of obtaining an unobstructed and nearer view of great Mt. Shasta itself. But, notwithstanding the statement that on the summit of that majestic mountain a visitor's book, enshrined in a golden dome, awaits the signature of every intrepid climber who makes the ascent to the top, I was content to remain below. No, not even the off chance of my being adorned with an enamel or metal "button" and (who knows ?) of being awarded some honorary title, such as "Col." or "Doc." in commemoration of the fact, could lure me from the level of that moorland plain at Sisson. Yet it was not, perhaps, with any sensation of passive contentment that I gazed at the western flanks of Shasta that afternoon. For who can look upon the terrific grandeur, the unutterable sublimity of that giant among mountains, without being touched by that spirit of reverence which trembles on the borderland of fear.

A dead volcano, men lightly say. But is it dead, while its pores still sweat with the threatening jets of solfataric life, while a crater, nearly a mile wide and two thousand five hundred feet deep,

like a bulging tumour upon its western slope, is still raw with the lurid wounds and unrusted weapons of yesterday's elemental strife ? Older, deader mountains than Shasta have spontaneously broken forth upon an affrighted world, and of these Orizaba is one of the most recent in America. This monster, which stands alone, brooking no rival, dominating hundreds of miles with its impelling majesty, the soft dun and warm lilac tones of its flanks veined with immaculate snow, the thinned ranks of the exhausted forests falling back from its nether slopes like the broken lines of an assailing army ; this awesome mountain, which defies comparison and extinguishes description, may one day—any day—fling aside its bastions and let loose the pent-up furies of centuries of garnered force.

At least so it seemed to me. I am but a poor geologist, and claim no relationship with the prophets, but I cannot look upon Mt. Shasta without being conscious of some impending calamity. Its awful silence is ominous. I do not think the little hills could skip like rams in that majestic presence. It oppresses, unnerves, and impels me to seek some sound, some company which will dispel the tension of the moment. I know none other that impresses one in quite the same way, or which demands a homage more humble. In a very minor degree Pilatus, from the Rigi side, might recall the general form of Shasta, but, then, Pilatus could be tucked away under one of the armpits of the American Goliath, and comparisons are pitiable.

But if Mt. Shasta should to-morrow rise up in

his wrath and bury Sisson in his ashes, antiquarians of an age yet unborn, who might think it worth their while to disinter the buried city, will discover in it one feature so pronounced that it eclipses all others. They will discover one of the most gallant rows of saloons that ever flaunted a cheerful vulgarity before the eye of temperance reformer. Thirteen strong they stand, shoulder to shoulder "agin the world," as though they would resist to their last drop of tap-drippings, the threatened onslaught of the prohibitionist army. . . . "Yes, they were doubtless hard drinkers in those early days, much given to the vice of applying 'hot and rebellious liquors' to their blood; obviously gregarious, too," the learned investigators will say, speaking in the language of their day (English having become quite dead), as they view the fossilised remains of Sisson's once brave row of beer dives; ". . . lest, peradventure, they built them in such close juxtaposition so that they might, in seasons of earthquake, help to hold each other up. . . . And these," a scholar of even greater perspicacity than the rest will continue, pointing to a number of brazen bowls, ticketed in bold letters, "Spit Boxes," and arrayed upon the floor, "these are unmistakably the vessels from which the Poor lapped their food. For is it not written in the chronicles of Josephus Americanus, that the Poor, being so oppressed, so weighed down with tyranny in the reign of King Plutocratus, the Feared, last monarch of America, resumed the horizontal position, taking their meals upon the door-mats of the Rich? . . . And this," says

another, carefully penetrating the dust of ages with a microscope, "this legend—'Don't spit on the floor: remember the Texas Floods,'—will, when deciphered by our expert, undoubtedly prove to be a remarkably choice example of the language of the day, an example which will throw a flood of illumination upon some of the most notable characteristics of these early people. . . . Possibly," he muses, looking closer, "a religious text . . . perchance a supplication from the humble Poor that their bowls may be filled with . . . precisely, ah! I have it! In these little wooden caskets, bearing most mythical designs, and the words 'Cuban Dandies: Two for a nickel,' are rolls of a brown, leafy substance, obviously vegetable; and here, in the 'Spit Boxes,' are the partially masticated portions of the same substance. Thus it comes to be proved, established beyond a shadow of question, that the Poor were vegetable feeders (substantiating my theory of retrogressing to an earlier, probably arboreal ancestor), and that they were sustained by portions of the dried leaf (a highly concentrated diet which would save the feeders trouble), supplied to them by the menials of their overlords, the Rich, the favourites of Plutocratus. . . . "

But I ramble, and hyperbole is a dangerous region. Sisson, as I have suggested, or any other place of the sort, once it is safely buried, would have to lie in darkness a very long time before it achieved as much as an antiquarian interest, and I hope, for the citizens' sake, Mt. Shasta will continue to slumber for many years yet. But should the end threaten while the watchman

sleepeth, peradventure there will be one righteous man in the city.

There were to me few places in California which were more refreshing and invigorating than the sweeping stretches of wild country surrounding the fish hatcheries at Sisson. Not only is the air of those altitudes, in contrast to the more sultry atmosphere of the deep cañons, lighter and cleaner, but it is redolent with a fresh moorland fragrance. It is, furthermore, a green country. At the time of my visit, the farmers were harvesting and baling their "wild hay," sweet with the aromatic odours of mint and other bogland plants. Farmyard ducks guzzled in idle content about the little water-courses which made tracks of luxuriant verdure of the roadside ditches; the spongy, steaming earth was clustered with bushes of wild rose, scrubby alder and birch, and willows, which a light wind tossed into soft billows of grey. In the midst of this upland plain, which might remind the Englishman of many a bit of hilly country in Western Britain, is situated what is, perhaps, one of the finest hatcheries of rainbow trout in the world. From innumerable shoals of little fellows, about an inch in length, to the dignified veterans of seven or eight years and of as many pounds in weight, the angler can see, in the beautiful ponds, such trout as will haunt his dreams for ever. Daily, during the season, hundreds of fish leave their nurseries in cans much like those used for the transit of milk. These cans are packed in specially constructed railway vans, the property of the State, and distributed to all parts of California and beyond. The expense

is, of course, considerable, but no one questions its validity, for without it every lake and river would long ago have been, without a doubt, "fished out." It is not only the sportsman who benefits by the good work done by the fish commissioners, but all classes of the community. Apply somewhat of the same principles to furred and feathered game, and their total extinction would at least be deferred.

If the plains of Sisson are a refreshing change from the deep, wooded valleys of the foothills, Shasta Springs is no less delightful in another sense. Following the cañon of the Sacramento river from the south, the way of the train is "the way of a serpent on a rock." Slowly gliding against the heavy grade, winding in and out the interminable curves, diving into innumerable tunnels, crossing and recrossing nearly twenty bridges, in only rather more than as many miles, now with the music of the rushing river at one window, now at the other, and always the towering spires of the pines bristling against the near skyline above, the journey in itself through this rugged part of the country is well worth the doing, well worth the increase of fare, which here amounts to some six cents a mile.

As one approaches Shasta Springs, the newsboy constrains you to purchase "a luminum, collapsible, sanitairy, souvenir drinkin' cup," with which to taste the waters. They are only fifteen cents apiece, or twenty-five with a view of Mt. Shasta on the lid. Ten minutes is allowed, and everyone, including train officials, hurry out to the famous spring. The crystal-clear waters, having been

conveyed from some mysterious source below, bubble up into a large raised basin like a church font. Round this some two or three hundred people are all doing their level best to make the most of their ten minutes. Americans have a vast appetite for water, iced or mineral, but, as the regular supply of two or three tin ladles, which are sufficient to minister to the needs of the few resident dyspeptics, has not been augmented, people who have not had the precaution to invest in a "sanitairy, souvenir cup," often find the ten minutes coming to an end without their having tasted the healing waters. Thus, with sullen mutterings of "d——d graft" upon their lips, they are obliged, after all, to fall back on the sagacious newsboy, who, with his basket of aluminium cups, is always at hand, and who, doubtless, enjoys the humour of the situation.

The waters, which are the property of the railway company, are, of course, "free," but by the sale of the drinking-cups the proprietors of the spring are possibly well recompensed for their ostensible generosity. To my taste Shasta water, though cold and sparkling, is too alkaline to drink other than as a medicine. But, if one may judge of its curative properties by the analytical list of its mineral compounds—a list nearly as long as a San Francisco dinner menu—it ought to be good for all the ills, known and unknown, of humanity. Of all its wonderful virtues, it excels in restoring to their pristine vigour the moribund livers of the torpid. In substantiation of its notorious efficacy in this estimable work, there is a story told of an old gentleman of the "glad nights and sad

mornings " description, who, in a strong moment of determined repentance, journeyed to Shasta's font to be made whole. He had not been there very long before he became a new man, and, gathering together the fragments of a fortune, once threatened with extinction at the hands of dissipation, he settled down near his redeeming waters, and lived to a cheerful old age. When he finally died, so vivifying had the effect of Shasta water been upon his liver, that it actually outlived him. " Yes, sir, an' it took three husky men to kill that there liver, su-ure it did so."

It is not the waters which are my most enduring memory of Shasta Springs, but, rather, the pleasant lawns and gardens of the plateau above. From the narrow, deep cañon, so narrow that there is only just width enough for the river and the little station at its foot, one ascends, by a gravity railway consisting of a single car, and that a very small one, some three or four hundred feet through the pines to the level above. Here the art of the gardener has done much to enhance the beauty of the primitive forest. It is here, where one sees them growing singly, or in groups amid the smooth green lawns and deciduous trees, that one realises the real charm of pines. Just as those eternal rows of palms in Southern California depress one's spirits by their dull uniformity, so in the north of the State the conifers of the foothills so overwhelm every other form of vegetation, that they soon become wearisome. Furthermore, you will rarely get an undergrowth in a pine forest that is of any note. Indeed, the ground is usually brown and dry, good and fragrant to make one's bed upon,

but not to live with. But look at these stately trees at Shasta Springs, standing in the sweet, green turf, which is ever being watered with scores of twirling sprays, and they at once appeal to you in a different manner. Here you can see them and appreciate them. Yonder, in the wilderness, you cannot see the trees for the wood.

Again, in England, or in any other country where the scenery is both on a smaller scale and more varied than it is in America, we may love nature best as far away from human interference as possible. In California it is different. Many a time have I gladly welcomed the sight of even a steel-girder bridge, or the log chute of a saw-mill, because they broke the unending, deadly similarity of the scene. Thus the tastefully built cottages and hotels, the cool lawns, vivid clusters of scarlet geraniums, and comfortable garden chairs, which have invaded the forest at Shasta Springs, have given it a new and more delightful charm. To my ear the subdued sound of a lawn-mower, in among the shadows of the tall trees, the good smell of the mown grass on the air when those shadows fade, are not the least of any country's joys. At Shasta Springs in August they might inspire an epic.

But, to descend to grosser things, there is one discomforting feature which the visitor to Shasta Springs, or most places of the sort in the West, may suffer, and it is this. If he happens to arrive at 2 p.m. he will not be able to get anything to eat, nor even a cup of tea or coffee to drink, until six o'clock, when dinner begins in the hotel. Now, although no one can call in question the American

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custom of shutting up his dining-rooms promptly on the stroke of the hour, and while it is none of our business if he prefers to do on three meals a day, surely it is an oversight on his part to overlook the requirements of his foreign patrons in these matters. He is never done advertising Californian resorts, and extolling them at the expense of those of Southern Europe. In every possible sense his are, of course, infinitely the superior to all other known places on the face of the globe. But does he expect Europeans to visit his resorts and forgo their afternoon tea? Does he imagine they will also willingly forgo the cafés and casinos of the Mediterranean, of Carlsbad, of Marienbad, of a hundred others, for places in California where they can get none of those things, where, also, they must come to dinner when the bell rings like so many school-children, and go without it if they are late for breakfast? The assumption is ridiculous, as every American who understands anything of Europe knows it to be. California may have the climate of Paradise, but she will never get the European winter visitors, as Nice and Mentone get them—or the wealthy Eastern American visitor either, until she more closely studies the desires of others, until she puts Mrs. Grundy in the cupboard and prepares to resolutely defend her liberties against those universal pests, the so-called reformers, female orators, meddling Sabbatarians and other faddists.

CHAPTER XXI

CONCLUSION

In the foregoing chapters the reader will perhaps have gathered that the key-note of the Californian's character is, like that of others of the Republic, individualism. He may make what boast he likes of his patriotism and democracy, he may make a fetish of that ugly word majority, he may pose as the very fountain of freedom and tolerance, and yet remain the incarnation of egotism. In his boastfulness, in his love of talking about himself, in his vain attempts to imitate the customs which he may admire in other people, in his lack of humour, in his peculiar distrust of foreigners, in that fidgety impatience which he oft-times mistakes for work, in his odd taste for illusion and sentimentality, and in that scorn of good manners, which latter he considers soft and effeminate, the Westerner might be likened to a full-blooded, bullying, rather spoiled schoolboy, at that awkward age 'twixt youth and manhood.

From what I know of him, the Eastern Yankee (and you offend the Native Son of California if you call him a Yankee) is outgrowing these symptoms of callow simplicity. Evolution is doing that for him, and it is doubtless no less ardently at work on the rougher, more raw material of the West. But, superficial as the above

epitome of the more prominent side of the Californian's nature may be, it will serve. For, after all, most of these features are entirely innocuous, and they are, to say the least, counterbalanced by a natural good-heartedness and kindliness. I repeat that, personally, I have never enjoyed greater hospitality than when in the Western States. Yet, at the same time, it is impossible for any stranger to avoid feeling how heartily the American hates and distrusts other nations, more particularly my own. This, of course, is but another expression of narrowness and individualism begotten of self-conceit; yet another characteristic of immaturity and want of balance and substance which will go with time. That this spirit of enmity should be fostered, that the distorted and lopsided exaggerations relating to "the war" should still be drilled into the hearts of the children, by means of the thrilling, cut-throat stories of "English atrocities" printed in the school books, passes one's comprehension, more especially when America prides herself upon being the apostle of peace. We and other nations, I hope, rather try to forget the ugly records of war. To salve the wound is better than to keep probing it with mischievous fingers that will not let it heal. America may be proud of her victories, of her hard-won independence. Good and well. But after nearly a century and a half of progress the Californian still talks of "the war" as though it were yesterday, still boasts of his triumphs, and hands down to his children's children lurid incidents of savage villainy attributed to the British forces which, whether they be true or

false, can have not the remotest influence for good. That there are many American people who would abolish, if they could, the perpetuation of such ill-starred romances we all know, but what are they among so many? I suppose there is something to be said in extenuation of an immature nation that exults with such extravagant gusto over its first fight. If it had a few more encounters to swell the pages of its history, doubtless the particular war referred to would soon be but one among others, as are the bellicose records of older nations. Already the recent war with Spain, mere walk-over as it was, has done something to blur the memories of the great days of Washington and Lee.

Upon the subject of the Yankee's boastfulness and self-conceit which arises out of the foregoing and which is rather more in evidence in the West than elsewhere, one hesitates to dwell further. As a characteristic it is so strongly emphasised in people of all classes and ages that it has often, in the minds of those who know the American only by hearsay or casual contact, completely extinguished all others. It has become such an every-day feature of a journalism, whose mission is to amuse, that there remains but little that has been left unsaid. Of course, the base from which all this tall talk and self-chosen attitude of superiority springs is that which has for its motto, "I am as good as you are, and a bit better." And if we consider from what a vast mixture of races the Americans have sprung, their isolated position as a people, the incalculable riches of their country, and the fact that the one and only standard of

greatness is material wealth ; if we allow that the American is the high priest of individualism, that he has no use for idealism in practice, though he adores it in theory—and who can question these things ?—then it would be the more remarkable if we found the Yankee less aggressively uppish than he actually is. But, after all, it is well to remember that this very self-conceit has been one of the main factors in the making of the American nation.

That any sort of refinement or culture could thrive in common with such a formula of life as this is, however, impossible. The American who sets out to seek culture, as though it were something that can be bought with dollars, may satisfy himself that he has got it, but the result is not always so convincing to other people. He may go to England or Ireland with the express purpose of hunting his genealogy, an odd pastime for a professedly democratic people to indulge in, but none the less popular for that, and when he has found it he may buy a coat-of-arms (there are plenty of dealers in heraldic emblems in the West), call together his friends and his neighbours, bid them rejoice with him in the discovery of this symbol of respectability, stick a cockade in his coachman's hat and a strange device upon his note-paper, and he is a made man, so long as the dollars hold out. Still he does not convince us all.

It is not necessary, however, to travel to America to find our old friend the self-made man, as he sometimes, but not always, likes to style himself. Do not the big manufacturing cities in England turn them out every year by the dozen ? Even

though they may differ in manner and speech and other minor details from the successful Yankee, are they not also "but the guinea stamp" after all? Notwithstanding the fact that John Bull, the shop-keeper, in his rôle of country gentleman, is one of the foremost figures in two out of every three novels published in England nowadays, there would seem to exist a notion that the idiosyncracies of Jonathan make more entertaining copy. Perhaps they do, and Jonathan does not very much mind. As a matter of fact, he rather likes to have his faults and foibles paraded before him in printer's ink by strangers—especially if they are distinguished strangers. Not that he alters his mode of life one little bit, or forthwith sets to improve his manners, nor yet does he appreciate the ridicule and endure the satire from any sense of humour which he might possess. He will clip the most defamatory passages out of the latest book that essays to call him hard names, and print them in his newspapers without comment. The book itself he places on the shelves of his public libraries so that all, whether inspired by mere curiosity or, possibly, a desire to know themselves as others know them, may read it. This attitude, though it may at first sight appear to be a direct contradiction to the statement that the Americans are a narrow people, is, as a matter of fact, nothing of the sort. Your Yankee is, in many respects, one of the narrowest of men. It is because he so dearly loves attention that he almost welcomes the most uncomplimentary things ever written of him. Let him be pilloried by abuse and stung by satire, so long as the abuser and

satirist is somebody of note hailing from Europe, he will rejoice in the notoriety he has earned and cherish the maledictory book with the profound gratification of one who has just received some long coveted honour. But let one of his own kind express himself to the disparagement of his country's people, and he will be immediately howled down and trampled on. Because Lowell said that Americans were "the most common-schooled and the least cultivated people in the world," he was execrated as a "traitor." Because David Graham Philips, possibly the most promising and ablest young American writer of the present age, fearlessly exposed the follies and the snobbery of such as "Josh Craig" and his tribe, he was brutally murdered.

On the other hand, Jonathan has an inordinate appetite for anything that lends a lustre to his own country, and, as I have shown in earlier chapters, he will nourish the most absurd delusions regarding the everyday things of life, come whence they may, provided they serve as a means to that end. Some people have only got to tell a lie often enough, and they will in course of time come to believe it to be the truth, and the Californian absorbs humbug as a sponge absorbs water, so long as it reflects some ostensible merit upon his own race, or demerit upon another. Thus, for example, I heard from a variety of sources that not only did Admiral Togo and other Japanese officers receive all their knowledge of naval warfare from America, but that the success of the Japanese over the Russians in the late war was entirely due to the fact that the Japanese ships were all officered by

Americans! Of course, that is mere flapdoodle. Everybody knows that it was not so. But some adventurer set the yarn afloat, and it ran over the West like a prairie fire, only with this difference, such a fire ultimately goes out, but the yarn stays and improves with keeping. It is not in the Californian to give credit to any nation but his own, least of all to the Japanese, whom he loves no better than the British.

It may be argued, such an attitude of hidebound conceit must be confined to the most ignorant classes. If that be so, then the latter make up ninety-five per cent of the population. Even the newspapers do their share in the germination and propagation of such puerile rubbish. I could fill this chapter, had I any desire to do so, with statements and inferences which, though they have not a shadow of foundation in fact, are perpetrated every day in the West under the guise of truth. The ill-savoured burden of all of them is the glorification of the one nation, i.e. " God's own country," at the expense of another. The American, as a whole, is not, I am aware, the only nation which indulges in invidious comparisons. He does his share, and it is a mighty big share, but, so far as my experience goes, the Californian, taken alone, makes a speciality of the pastime and excels in it, possibly because he is more ignorant and less tolerant than the Easterner. But what hope is there for, say, the rancher, whose reading often does not get beyond the newspaper—and we know what it is—when some of the leading lights of America persist in disparaging other nations, that their own may seem the more exalted.

Now, John Burroughs, a pleasing writer and keen observer, is one who we might believe to be above paltry indulgence in invidious comparisons. Yet, in writing of American trout, he cannot resist adding, "British trout, by the way, are not so beautiful as our own; they are less brilliantly marked and have much coarser scales, there is no gold or vermilion in their colouring." Allowing for the fact that people will ever disagree as to the precise definition of beauty, the first sentence, taken with the remainder of the quotation, rings with a sinister note of prejudice. It is childish and ridiculous to make sweeping statements of that nature regarding the colour of trout, for every observant angler, not to mention scientific naturalists, knows full well that trout vary in colour to such an extraordinary extent, even within the confines of a single parish, that the ablest ichthyologists have blundered in their efforts to fix differently marked specimens as distinct species, when they were nothing more than sub-varieties. To say that British trout have "no gold or vermilion in their colouring" is so utterly false as to be grotesque. One can pass by these things when they are uttered by a boastful schoolboy or some ignorant chaw-bacon. But Mr. Burroughs is very far from being either one or the other. He is a man with a vast experience of life, one of the last survivors of that great school of New England writers which included Lowell, Holmes, Thoreau, Emerson, Longfellow, Hawthorne, and others, a crop of worthies that would, as contemporaries, be hard to match anywhere, yet even he cannot resist sinking into that

narrow rut of petty envy. He, in common with the most foolish, must look at other people's possessions and virtues through the wrong end of the telescope. Thus the American, instead of having a dignified pride in his wonderful country, degenerates to the level of a bigoted sectarian, who allows a jaundiced eye to completely submerge his better nature.

In bringing the last of these rambling chapters to an end, in writing the last paragraph of a brief record of one of the happiest years I have ever spent, the most dominant note in my mind rings with that same regret which I have expressed at the beginning—a regret that I would fain put aside . . . I wish I could feel that the Californian's parting handshake, good and kindly as it has ever been, came from a little nearer his heart.

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